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THE CONGO STATE



WILSON & SONS

His Majesty the King of the Belgians
Leopold II. King of the Belgians

THE CONGO STATE

OR

The Growth of Civilisation in Central Africa

BY

✓
DEMETRIUS C. BOULGER

AUTHOR OF "HISTORY OF CHINA" "THE LIFE OF GORDON"
ETC. ETC.

*WITH A PORTRAIT IN PHOTOGRAVURE OF
H. M. THE KING OF THE BELGIANS
FIFTY-EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS AND A MAP*

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 MAP OF THE CONGO STATE



BARON VAN EETVELDE
Secretary of State for the Independent State of the Congo

THE CONGO STATE

CHAPTER I

THE CONCEPTION OF THE CONGO STATE

IF it be permissible to apply to modern affairs the Biblical imagery that the man who successfully plants a tree where none grew before has done a good life's work, then it is true to say that the happiest monarch should be the one who founds a new State. That happiness must be enhanced by the fact that his creation is no fleeting achievement won by the sword, but that it is firmly based on what ought to be permanent claims to respect and security in the welfare of the subject race as well as the credit of the ruling power. How much greater, then, should be the happiness and the title to fame when the interest of the monarch and the benefit of the people can be shown to harmonise with, and indeed to form part of, that human progress which must within the æons of coming centuries place, according to our limited powers of comprehension, man, irrespective of creed, colour, and climate, on something like an equality before the God of all!

To this credit there will never be any difficulty in showing that Leopold, the second King of the Belgians of that name and of his House, is entitled. His prescience, energy, and courage have erected to himself a monument

that will not pass away, and that, unlike memorials of stone and brass, seems destined to acquire increased importance and magnificence with the lapse of time. Yet the future historian will surely marvel that it should have fallen to the lot of two succeeding princes, father and son, to accomplish on two different continents of the Old World practically the same feat, one which Napoleon, despite all his military triumphs, never achieved.

The Belgian nation owes to Leopold the First, who but for the unkind decree of fate would have figured among the wisest of British rulers, the fostering care of its freedom and independence. When he accepted the crown of the youngest and most perilous throne in Europe, he said, in the appropriate words that never fail to flow from true eloquence, "Human destiny does not offer any nobler and more useful task than to be called upon to found the independence of a nation and to consolidate its liberties." It may be said, in his case, that Europe assigned the task, to which it was his proud distinction to prove that he was more than equal. But in the case of Leopold the Second no such qualification can be made. The founding of the Congo State, the opening of its territories to all the beneficent enterprises of civilisation, the moral and material improvement of its native races, marked out by King Leopold when he first gave definite form to ideas that he had expressed years before, and that at the present moment are well advanced on the road to realisation, represent an achievement very similar to that accomplished by his illustrious father and predecessor. The one converted "the cockpit of Europe" into the most prosperous State of the Continent; the other has founded in Central Africa a vast dominion, where the only serious and promising attempt has as yet been systematically made to redeem the negro race from the curse of ages.

From a very early period of his career King Leopold the Second had shown a deep and intelligent interest in

distant regions, and had fully grasped the fact that the manufacturing countries of Europe would decline from their high prosperity owing to the growth of population, unless they discovered fresh markets for their manufactures and colonies for their surplus population. No country was, or is, more actively and intelligently devoted to industry and manufacture than Belgium ; in none also was, or is, the population increasing at a greater annual rate ; and the few clear-sighted men who looked ahead—and among these King Leopold II. is entitled by universal admission to the first place—realised the inevitable consequences at some future date. But among many admirable points in the Belgian character is not included the spirit of adventure that founds great colonies or carries the trade of a State into remote regions. The typical Belgian would rest content with what he possessed, indifferent to what might happen in some future generation. Caution controls his courage, and, left to herself, Belgium would have been the last State of Europe to found a colony or to participate in the division of a continent. Fortunately for her, she has possessed a ruler whose larger views have supplied the main defect in the national character. The courage of her King has proved equal to the accomplishment of a task that would have tested the strength of the greatest of colonising Powers, while his sagacity has known how to eliminate from the undertaking, one by one, the dangers that might well have thwarted his plans and nullified all his enterprise.

If the first origin of what resulted in the Congo State has to be discovered, it would perhaps be found in the speech which the now reigning King of the Belgians delivered, as Duke of Brabant, before the Senate on 17th February 1860. In that speech, which was no doubt the result of his own observations during the tour he had then recently made in the Far East, he said, “The possession of coasts and of a magnificent port, perhaps unique in

the world, are the elements of wealth which we could not exploit too much, and which all the peoples who have enjoyed great fortune have largely made use of." Having laid down this general proposition, the Duke went on to use the memorable words, "I claim for Belgium her share of the sea." In subsequent speeches he pointed out the urgent need there was for his country to procure fresh markets, and, with the view of stimulating national effort and confidence, he recalled the brief but brilliant deeds of the Company of Ostend, which was deemed such a formidable rival by the East India Company that its suppression formed part of one of the treaties of alliance between Great Britain and the old empire. It was not with words only that the young Prince strove to induce his countrymen to take up schemes beyond the narrow confines of their State. From an early period he devoted himself to the improvement of the ports of Ostend and Antwerp, and, during a reign that has now covered more than thirty years of ever-increasing national prosperity, he has contributed largely to the remarkable but little appreciated development of the port of Antwerp as an outlet for the commerce of Germany as well as of Belgium.

There is reason to think that at the beginning of his reign King Leopold held the view that the new markets for his country would be discovered in Asia. Africa was still "the Dark Continent," and the least promising of the divisions of the globe; but the progress effected in the elucidation of its mysteries, in the acquisition of definite knowledge concerning the new world of inner Africa, found in King Leopold the most attentive and, as it has proved, the most appreciative student and observer.

The discovery of Lake Tanganyika by Sir Richard Burton and Captain Speke in 1858 may be regarded as the first act in the revelation of the region which occupies our present attention. A few years later Speke and Grant discovered the sources of the Nile and Lake Victoria.

These travellers all proceeded inland from Zanzibar. Sir Samuel Baker, acting as the Khedive's lieutenant above Khartoum, completed their work on the Nile by the discovery of Lake Albert and of the section of the river connecting that lake with Victoria. At a much earlier period David Livingstone had explored the valley of the Zambesi and appeared before the blacks as a messenger of good tidings, healing the body and the soul, preaching peace and goodwill, and teaching them respect for life and the love of labour; but it was not until 1866 that he reached the Congo region and placed his name among its discoverers by adding Lakes Moero and Bangweolo to the map. The finding of Livingstone by Mr. H. M. Stanley in November 1871; the death of Livingstone, the discovery of the fact by Commander Lovett Cameron, and the conveyance to Europe of his remains by that officer; the second departure of Stanley at the end of 1874 to explore the Dark Continent and to complete the geographical labours of Livingstone,—these were the concluding geographical incidents of the period when the King of the Belgians first took up the subject before the world.

But the explorers and the missionaries had done more than add to geographical knowledge. They had thrown a lurid light on the horrors of the slave trade. They had tracked the evil to its root, and shown the inhumanity and devilish cruelty with which the slave hunters prosecuted their raids among a population of millions, unarmed and unable to defend themselves. The only export from that region was "black ivory," as human beings came to be termed, and each successive traveller harrowed the feelings of the reader with tales of the barbarities inflicted on the unfortunate captives. The soul of Christendom and civilisation revolted against these outrages, and the suppression of the slave trade in Central Africa came to be regarded as a solemn duty imposed on the charitable public of Europe and America. The Governments which

had decreed universal freedom could not feign indifference to proceedings that defeated their own laws, and brought a common pressure to bear on the ruler of Egypt so that he might be induced to adopt repressive measures on the Upper Nile. With that object, Samuel Baker, and after him Charles Gordon, were appointed Governors of the Soudan, and in the time of the latter it at last became true in the year 1879 to say that the pursuit of slaves had been suppressed between Khartoum and the Equator. This result, however, had not been attained in 1876 at the time of the first Brussels Conference, when the corner stone of the Congo State was laid, and south of the Equator to as far as the Zambesi the slave trade flourished uncontrolled and unchecked.

It will be convenient at this point to sum up the considerations which determined the views generally held at the moment of the first Brussels Conference. The desire to fill up the dark places of the map had resulted in great geographical discoveries in the interior of Africa. What had been discovered justified the view that what had still to be revealed would prove of permanent importance. Already enough was known to encourage the belief in the existence of inland navigation, and that Europeans would find life supportable on the Equator. The desire to evangelise the blacks had long been felt among Christians of all creeds, and the labours of Livingstone and others had shown that success was possible, and perhaps easy of attainment. The missionaries and the explorers had also made clear the imperative duty of the free and happy nations to deliver their unfortunate brethren from the terrible sufferings under which they passed through life. To release Africa from the slave trade was admitted, even by the sceptic, to be necessary for the removal of a stain from the escutcheon of civilisation. These facts appealed to the religious and the philanthropic.

But it would not be right to eliminate from our survey other considerations of a more self-interested character. The exploration of Africa had given rise to the desire to absorb it. The old view that Africa was a continent of no value had been shaken, and was on the eve of passing away. The opinion was fast spreading, that Africa might prove, as a centre of trade and as a possible seat of empire, not less important, to say the least, than Australia and South America. Three of the European States—England, France, and Portugal—were already established on its soil; Italy was known to covet Tripoli, if not Tunis; and Germany was already meditating over the creation of colonial dependencies. The demonstration that Central Africa was inhabitable by the white man marked the first step towards its absorption within the zone of civilisation. The proof that it was a fertile and prosperous region, with immense latent wealth of every kind, hastened the process of absorption, and made it inevitable. The remarkable feature in the transfer of African territory to the hands of Europeans, was that Belgium should have been able, with the general assent of the Powers, and with their solemn sanction, given beyond the possibility of retractation, to obtain so large a part—indeed the whole, geographically regarded—of Central Africa. The manner in which this pacific and durable triumph was achieved has now to be described; but it was due to the remarkable prescience and promptitude with which the King of the Belgians saw that the psychological moment had arrived to take the lead in solving what had become one of the great international problems of the time. He was able to stand before the world in this question as the representative of civilisation, and at the same time to pave the way for the accomplishment of his long-sought purpose in providing his country with new markets and a promising outlet for her excessive population.

In the summer of the year 1876 King Leopold addressed a letter to the most eminent geographical authorities and

the leading geographical societies, inviting them to take part in a geographical conference at Brussels. The King said in his letter: "In almost every country a lively interest is taken in the geographical discoveries recently made in Central Africa. Several expeditions, supported by individual subscriptions, which prove the desire to attain important results, have been, and are being, undertaken in Africa. The English, the Americans, the Germans, the Italians, and the French have taken part in their different degrees in this generous movement. These expeditions are the response to an idea eminently civilising and Christian: to abolish slavery in Africa, to pierce the darkness that still envelops that part of the world, while recognising the resources which appear immense,—in a word, to pour into it the treasures of civilisation: such is the object of this modern crusade. Hitherto the efforts made have been without accord, and this has given rise to the opinion, held especially in England, that those who pursue a common object should confer together to regulate their march, to establish some landmarks, to delimit the regions to be explored, so that no enterprise may be done twice over. I have recently ascertained in England that the principal members of the Geographical Society of London are very willing to meet at Brussels the Presidents of the Geographical Societies of the Continent, and those other persons who, by their travels, studies, philanthropic tastes, and charitable instincts, are the most closely identified with the efforts to introduce civilisation into Africa. This reunion will give rise to a sort of conference, the object of which would be to discuss in common the actual situation in Africa, to establish the results attained, to define those which have to be attained."

The King's invitation met with a ready response in the six great States of Europe to which it was addressed, and from each of them the most distinguished persons in



BARON LAMBERMONT.

the field of geographical science were deputed to take part in the Brussels Conference. Great Britain was represented by Sir Bartle Frere, Sir Henry Rawlinson, Sir Rutherford Alcock, Sir Leopold M'Lintock, and Commander Lovett Cameron. Germany sent Baron von Richthofen, and the celebrated travellers, Nachtigal, Schweinfurth, and Rohlf's. France deputed Admiral de la Roncière le Noury, the illustrious Ferdinand de Lesseps, and the Secretary of the Geographical Society of Paris. Austria provided two worthy representatives in the enterprising Count Zichy, and M. de Hochstetter, President of the Vienna Geographical Society. Russia and Italy sent only one member each to the Conference—M. de Semenow and the Chevalier Negri, respectively. Belgium sent eleven representatives to the Conference, prominent among them being the distinguished Baron Lambertmont. The other ten were—MM. Banning, Edmond de Borchgrave, Couvreur, Count Goblet d'Alviella, E. de Laveleye, Saintellette, Smolders, Van Bieroliet, Van den Bosche, and Van Volxem; and of these, M. Emile Banning acted as Secretary of the Conference. The Conference was held in the Royal Palace at Brussels, and lasted for three days—from the 12th to the 14th September 1876. The King opened it in person, when he made the following speech:—

“GENTLEMEN,—Permit me to thank you warmly for the amiable promptness with which you have been kind enough to come here at my invitation. Besides the satisfaction that I shall have in hearing you discuss here the problems in the solution of which we are interested, I experience the liveliest sense of pleasure in meeting the distinguished men whose works and valorous efforts on behalf of civilisation I have followed for many years.

“The subject which brings us together to-day is one that deserves in the highest degree to engage the attention of the friends of humanity. To open to civilisation the only part of the globe where it has not yet pene-

trated, to pierce the darkness shrouding entire populations, that is, if I may venture to say so, a crusade worthy of this century of progress; and I am happy to discover how much public sentiment is in favour of its accomplishment. The current is with us.

“Gentlemen, among those who have the most closely studied Africa, a good many have been led to think that there would be advantage to the common object they pursue if they could be brought together for the purpose of conference with the object of regulating the march, combining the efforts, deriving some profit from all circumstances, and from all resources, and finally, in order to avoid doing the same work twice over.

“It has appeared to me that Belgium, a central and a neutral State, would be a spot well chosen for such a reunion, and it is this view which has emboldened me to call you all here, to my home, for the little Conference that I have the great satisfaction of opening to-day. Is it necessary for me to say to you that in inviting you to Brussels I have not been guided by egotistic views? No, gentlemen: if Belgium is small, she is happy and satisfied with her lot. I have no other ambition than to serve her well. But I will not go so far as to declare that I should be insensible to the honour which would result for my country if an important forward movement in a question which will mark our epoch should be dated from Brussels. I should be happy that Brussels should become in some way the headquarters of this civilising movement.

“I have, then, allowed myself to believe that it would be convenient to you to come together to discuss and to specify, with the authority belonging to you, the means to be employed in order to plant definitely the standard of civilisation on the soil of Central Africa, to agree as to what should be done to interest the public in your noble enterprise, and to induce it to support you with its money. For, gentlemen, in works of this kind it is the concurrence

of the greater number that makes success ; it is the sympathy of the masses which it is necessary to solicit, and to know how to obtain.

“ With what resources should we not, in fact, be endowed if everyone for whom a franc is little or nothing consented to throw it into the coffers destined for the suppression of the slave trade in the interior of Africa !

“ Great progress has been already accomplished ; the unknown has been attacked from many sides ; and if those here present, who have enriched science with such important discoveries, would describe for us the principal points, their exposition would afford us all a powerful encouragement.

“ Among the questions which have still to be examined the following have been cited :—

“ 1. The precise designation of the basis of operation to be acquired on the coast of Zanzibar, and near the mouth of the Congo, either by conventions with the chiefs, or by purchase or leases from private persons.

“ 2. Designation of the routes to be opened in their order towards the interior, and of the stations—hospitable, scientific, and pacifying—to be organised as the means of abolishing slavery, of establishing concord among the chiefs, of procuring for them just and distinguished judges, etc. etc.

“ 3. The creation—the work being well defined—of an International and Central Committee, and of National Committees to prosecute the execution, each in what will directly concern it, by placing the object before the public of all countries, and by making an appeal to the charitable that no good cause has ever addressed in vain.

“ Such are, gentlemen, the different points which seem to merit your attention ; if there are others, they will appear in the course of your discussions, and you will not fail to throw light on them.

“ My desire is to serve, as you shall point out to me,

the great cause for which you have already done so much. I place myself at your disposal for this purpose, and offer you a cordial welcome."

The Conference disclosed a remarkable and gratifying unanimity of view and sentiment among the distinguished members. The example of the King of the Belgians promoted a sentiment of disinterestedness, and the advancement of geography and philanthropy was on that occasion undisturbed by the intrusion of ambitious motives. After three days' discussion and the examination of much interesting matter, the Conference drew up the following Declaration on the subject submitted for its consideration and decision.

"In order to attain the object of the International Conference of Brussels—that is to say, to explore scientifically the unknown parts of Africa, to facilitate the opening of the routes which shall enable civilisation to penetrate into the interior of the African Continent, to discover the means for the suppression of the slave trade among the negro race in Africa—it is necessary :

"(1) To organise on a common international plan the exploration of the unknown parts of Africa, by limiting the regions to be explored—on the east and on the west by the two oceans, the Indian and the Atlantic, on the south by the basin of the Zambesi, on the north by the frontiers of the new Egyptian territory and the independent Soudan. The most appropriate mode of effecting this exploration will be the employment of a sufficient number of detached travellers, starting from different bases of operation.

"(2) To establish, as bases for these operations, a certain number of scientific and hospitable stations both on the coasts and in the interior of Africa—for example, at Bagamoyo and Loanda, as well as at Ujiji, Nyangwe, and other points already known, which it would be necessary to connect by intermediate stations."

These excellent observations might never have produced any practical result if the Conference had not gone on to sketch, and in a certain degree to provide, the machinery necessary for the conduct and success of the philanthropic and civilising campaign which it decreed. It proposed the creation of an Association bearing the title of "The International Association for the Exploration and Civilisation of Central Africa," and on that Association devolved the task of realising the declaration made by the Geographical Conference at Brussels. The International Association was to be carried on by means of an International Commission, and by National Committees dependent on it in each country. The International Commission was practically a Parliament of all the Committees, but its executive power was entrusted to an Executive Committee composed of the King as President, Sir Bartle Frere, Dr. Nachtigal, and M. de Quatrefages. When Sir Bartle Frere became Governor of the Cape he resigned his seat, and his place was taken by General Sanford, long United States Minister at Brussels. Colonel Strauch, of the Belgian army, was appointed Secretary.

Committees were rapidly formed in all the countries of the participants in the Conference and in some that had not been included. In Austria the Archduke Rudolph, heir to the Austrian throne, became President of the Committee in his country; and among the States that had not sent delegates to Brussels it may be mentioned that in Spain the King, and in Holland Prince Henry of the Netherlands, became Presidents of their nation's Committees. In the United States of America also a Committee was formed. But if in other countries the matter was taken up with warm and encouraging sympathy, it was in Belgium that the executive power remained. The Executive Committee was a select body through which the real originator of the whole movement could continue to work for the accomplishment of the purposes he had

clearly defined. The Belgian Committee also was the most promptly organised and the most in earnest of all the National Committees. The Count of Flanders, the brother of the King, became its first President, and the more active members of the Belgian nobility and the leading men of science were soon enrolled on its lists.

Six weeks after the close of the Brussels Conference the first meeting of the Belgian Committee was held on 6th November 1876, and, with the view of encouraging the movement by every means in his power, the King attended in person and delivered the following speech on the scope of the work that had now to be performed:—

“GENTLEMEN,—The slave trade, which still exists over a large part of the African Continent, is a plague spot that every friend of civilisation would desire to see disappear.

“The horrors of that traffic, the thousands of victims massacred each year through the slave trade, the still greater number of perfectly innocent beings who, brutally reduced to captivity, are condemned *en masse* to forced labour in perpetuity, have deeply moved all those who have even partially studied this deplorable situation, and they have conceived the idea of uniting together, and concerting, in a word, for the founding of an International Association to put an end to an odious traffic which makes our epoch blush, and to tear aside the veil of darkness which still enshrouds Central Africa. The discoveries due to daring explorers permit us to say from this day that it is one of the most beautiful and the richest countries created by God.

“The Conference of Brussels has nominated an Executive Committee to carry into execution its declarations and resolutions.

“The Conference has wished, in order to place itself in closer relationship with the public, whose sympathy will constitute our force, to found in each State, National Committees. These Committees, after delegating two

members from each of them to form part of the International Committee, will popularise in their respective countries the adopted programme.

“The work has already obtained in France and Belgium important subscriptions, which make us indebted to the donors. These acts of charity, so honourable to those who have rendered them, stimulate our zeal in the mission we have undertaken. Our first task should be to touch the hearts of the masses, and, while increasing our numbers, to gather in a fraternal union little onerous for each member, but powerful and fruitful by the accumulation of individual efforts and their results.

“The International Association does not pretend to reserve for itself all the good that could or ought to be done in Africa. It ought, especially at the commencement, to forbid itself a too extensive programme. Sustained by public sympathy, we hold the conviction, that if we accomplish the opening of the routes, if we succeed in establishing stations along the routes followed by the slave merchants, this odious traffic will be wiped out, and that these routes and these stations, while serving as fulcrums for travellers, will powerfully contribute towards the evangelisation of the blacks, and towards the introduction among them of commerce and modern industry.

“We boldly affirm that all those who desire the enfranchisement of the black races are interested in our success.

“The Belgian Committee, emanating from the International Committee, and its representative in Belgium, will exert every means to procure for the work the greatest number of adherents. It will assist my countrymen to prove once more that Belgium is not only a hospitable soil, but that she is also a generous nation, among whom the cause of humanity finds as many champions as she has citizens.

“I discharge a very agreeable duty in thanking this

assembly, and in warmly congratulating it for having imposed on itself a task the accomplishment of which will gain for our country another brilliant page in the annals of charity and progress."

In this manner was the King's idea given a practical form, and what may be called a start towards the goal it was destined and deserved to reach. At the moment when other countries were hesitating or indifferent in their views about Africa, he had foreseen that the uplifting shadows over the Dark Continent would reveal a land of promise. By heredity and position the friend of civilisation and the advocate of progress in the world, it was only natural that the questions relating to the future of Africa, which interested every intelligent mind that had been attracted to the subject, should, in a very special degree, absorb the notice of the ruler of the Belgian people. While the general admission can surely be allowed that no one could read of the horrors of the slave trade without an involuntary desire that no effort should be spared for its suppression, the King, with a deeper sense of responsibility, and with perhaps the hope that circumstances would admit of Europe making him the chief leader in this campaign of civilisation—the Godefroid de Bouillon, as it were, of the nineteenth century crusade—marked the evil and pondered over the means of its abatement and removal. As someone has well said, he contemplated achieving the work of a Titan with the means of pigmies; but courage, confidence, and address, directed, let it not be forgotten, by the highest motives and the spirit of a great humanising mission, have earned success where far greater power and resources less skilfully employed might have failed.

The germ of the origin of the Congo State may perhaps be discovered in the views set forth by the King when Duke of Brabant as to his country's need for fresh markets and a share in the sea. But its history begins with the

founding of the International Association for the exploration and civilisation of Central Africa, by the declaration of the Brussels Geographical Conference. In its name, in the sympathy it commanded, the Association was international, but the executive power, the seat of influence as it were, remained in Belgium. It had to discharge its duties in the eyes of the whole world, it had to win universal sympathy by the loftiness of its ideals, and at the same time it had to husband its limited resources so that it might not be wrecked at an early period by their exhaustion. But the justification for this laborious undertaking, for this sustained effort in watching over the cradle of what long seemed a delicate infant, was that, in addition to the general good of civilisation, a great national need would be supplied and an undoubtedly patriotic work accomplished. The more powerful members of the Brussels Conference might have left the table with the intention of urging their Governments to throw themselves with greater resources and with readier means into the breach, and leave King Leopold nothing but the barren honour of having been the first to indicate the way. There would have been no want of faith in such a course, for all were pledged to promote the common cause; and as the principle of altruism has not yet been admitted in the domain of practical affairs, the only conclusion is that no one then appreciated with the same correctness and clearness as the King of the Belgians the task of civilisation and its reward in the dark and vast regions of Central Africa.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST BELGIAN EXPEDITIONS

THE first expeditions equipped from Belgium for the practical execution of the proposals of the Geographical Conference at Brussels, which have now to be described, were all despatched inland from the East Coast of Africa, and had their base in the territory of Zanzibar. It is true that, before any of them had started, Mr. H. M. Stanley had crossed the continent from east to west, and established the important fact that the Congo for a great portion of its course was a navigable river. But the application of his discoveries to the opening of Central Africa was deferred to a later period, and for the sake of clearness it may be mentioned that all the experimental expeditions undertaken by Belgians operated from the East Coast, and in regions which now form no part of the Congo State.

On 15th October 1877 the first expedition sailed from Ostend, and arrived at Zanzibar on 12th of December. The command was entrusted to Captain Crespel, and with him went Lieutenant Cambier (both officers of the Belgian army), Dr. Maes, and an Austrian, M. Marno, who had entered the service of the Association. At Zanzibar the expedition was to organise the means of reaching the interior; and as the then reigning Sultan, Seyyid Burghash, was completely amenable to British control, and had moreover recently signed an anti-slavery convention with Sir Bartle Frere, there was no difficulty

in procuring the necessary escort and supplies. But misfortunes soon befell this pioneer force. Dr. Maes contracted a fever, and died one month after arrival. Captain Crespel was incapacitated from the commencement, and died a few days after Maes. Before his death he had despatched MM. Cambier and Marno into the interior. The difficulties of the route, the loss of all their cattle through the attacks of the tsetse fly, and the marshy character of the region, hindered their progress and rendered any considerable success impossible. After an absence of nearly two months Lieutenant Cambier returned to the coast, and all that he could boast of was that he had not lost a man. Lieutenant Cambier was appointed chief of the expedition in place of Captain Crespel, and a reinforcement was sent to him from Belgium in the persons of Lieutenant Wautier and Dr. Dutricux.

In the autumn of 1878 the three Belgians made a fresh journey, starting on this occasion from Bagamoyo, and Lieutenant Cambier succeeded, despite frequent disputes with his carriers, who several times deserted him *en masse*, in crossing the desert plateau of Mgondamkali, and in effecting an alliance with the great chief Mirambo, who scarcely deserved, however, his title of "the Black Napoleon." He was the first native potentate with whom a Belgian officer took the oath of blood; and, as that represents the most solemn oath of Central Africa, and must frequently be referred to in the course of this work, it may be well to describe the manner in which it is performed. The two persons about to be declared brothers by the oath of blood sit down facing each other; two chickens are then killed, and their livers are taken out and grilled; a slight incision is then made in the chest or arms of the two persons, and a few drops of blood are collected on freshly-gathered leaves; the blood is then sprinkled over the livers, which are eaten by the

men at the same moment. The oath of mutual support is then taken, and it is said that the negroes believe great misfortunes will fall on anyone breaking this oath. In every region and under every phase of society, superstition has been invoked to make men keep their word and tell the truth. The negro system of establishing the sanctity of treaties is not quite so imposing as the modes of civilisation, but the testimony of experience is that the engagements are kept quite as well, if not better, under the primitive ceremony of the exchange of blood.

While M. Cambier was establishing relations with Mirambo, his lieutenant, M. Wautier, was engaged in the task of keeping open communications with the coast. In the midst of those labours, rendered especially difficult by the torrential character of the rains, Lieutenant Wautier died, making the third victim Belgium had offered in the cause of African exploration. A Swiss traveller, well acquainted with the country (M. Broyon), then attached himself to the expedition and rendered useful services. M. Cambier's main object was to found a station on Lake Tanganyika, and, after receiving the necessary supplies from his comrades at Tabora, he started alone for the accomplishment of his mission. The distance from that place to the margin of the lake is only one hundred and sixty miles, but the region to be traversed presented still greater difficulties than those between it and the coast. His carriers deserted him along the march by fifties at a time, and it was largely due to the hospitality and assistance of the chief of Simba that the Belgian officer accomplished his purpose. M. Cambier reached Karema on the Lake Tanganyika on 12th August 1879, and fixed there the site of the first station of the Association. By a treaty with the local chief, he obtained the grant of five thousand acres of land, in the midst of a salubrious and productive region abounding in game. Having established this inland post, the Belgian commander returned to the

coast, where he found that a second expedition had arrived from Europe.

The second Belgian Expedition reached Zanzibar in May 1879, and was composed of the following officers:—Captain Popelin, of the Headquarters Staff, in command, Dr. Van den Heuvel, and Lieutenant Dutalis; but the last-named was compelled by ill-health to return at once. The most interesting point in connection with this second expedition was the experiment made in providing a new mode of transport. Lieutenant Cambier's experience had shown that conveyance by carts and oxen was practically impossible, and he sent in a report advising that some other means should be tried. Some one, not unnaturally perhaps, suggested elephants, and the King decided to incur the very considerable expense of importing four trained elephants from India; and two Englishmen, specially experienced in the treatment of those animals, were engaged to conduct them to Karema. Two of the animals died on the way to Tabora, and the other two very soon after their arrival at Karema. The failure of this costly experiment produced only temporary discouragement, but did not retard the founding of the station on Lake Tanganyika. To complete the misfortune, it may, however, be mentioned here that the two Englishmen were some months later murdered by brigands, who attacked them on their way to the coast.

In the meantime M. Cambier and Captain Popelin had joined hands, and founded the station of Karema, in which all the stores were collected, and a small negro force was organised for its defence.

The third Belgian Expedition, consisting of MM. Burdo and Roger, arrived about this time, but a war between Mirambo ("the brother" of M. Cambier) and the friendly chief of Simba produced such bloodshed and confusion that the Belgians had to divide their forces—Cambier remaining at Karema, and Popelin taking up a position

at Tabora. Their strength was weakened at this junction by the death just mentioned of the two Englishmen who brought the elephants, and by the compulsory return through ill-health of M. Burdo to Europe.

At this critical moment the arrival of the fourth and strongest expedition from Belgium put a better aspect on the face of affairs. It was under the command of Captain Ramaeckers, who was accompanied by two lieutenants of the Belgian Artillery, MM. Becker and De Leu. A photographer was also attached to the expedition, but his health gave way immediately on arrival. It was while he was struggling across the belt of difficult country that news reached Ramaeckers of the perilous state of Cambier and Popelin. He hastened on, and the reassembly of the Belgian officers on the shores of Tanganyika was one of the earliest triumphs won in the name of the Association. Lieutenant De Leu had, however, succumbed to fever at Tabora. On the 10th December 1880 Lieutenant Cambier resigned the command to Captain Ramaeckers. During his three years' command Cambier had done excellent work, of which the admirable station of Karema was the outward token and prize.

After his departure, his colleague Popelin carried on the objects of the mission by navigating a boat on the lake, but in May 1882 his career was concluded by a sudden attack of the fatal malarial fever. A few months later, Ramaeckers followed his comrades to the grave; and of Ramaeckers great hopes had been entertained, because he was an experienced African traveller, who had known how to find the way to the black man's heart. Of him the following affecting story of devotion is told:—While in Tripoli he had a black servant named Bamboula, whom he left behind on returning to Belgium. Bamboula had become so attached to him that he declared he could not live apart from him, and left his home in Tripoli to find his old master. He worked his way as a sailor from

Tripoli to Marseilles, where he arrived without a penny. He then worked there until he had saved the sum to carry him to Brussels, and one morning Ramaeckers was surprised to see Bamboula walk into his room, with the observation : "I could not live away from you, master, and therefore I have come to rejoin you." The man who inspired that devotion must have been a worthy champion of civilisation.

After the death of Ramaeckers, Lieutenant Becker held the post in the presence of many difficulties, until he in turn was relieved by Lieutenant Storms, who had been sent from Europe with the special object of founding a new station on the western coast of Tanganyika. Storms crossed the lake and founded the station of Mpala, on its western shore, almost immediately opposite Karema. He made this station as important as Karema, and he also established relations of confidence and cordiality with the chief of the district named Mpala. Storms described him as the most sympathetic negro he had ever met, and on his deathbed Mpala commanded his people to obey the white man, and to accept the chief appointed by him as his best successor. This was the beginning of the political influence of the Belgian officers on the west coast of Tanganyika, where it has endured ever since, and is now firmly established. In two and a half years Storms completed the work of his countrymen on the eastern side of Tanganyika, and may be said to have begun that on its western side. He was the last of the Belgian officers to labour in that field, for the rearrangement of the spheres in Africa deprived Belgium of that opening on the eastern side, in obtaining which some valiant men had given their lives. Yet, for their labours and loss, it will always be impossible to overlook the four or five Zanzibar expeditions, which began with that of Crespel and ended with that of Storms.

The first of these expeditions had not started, when

Mr. Stanley appeared at the mouth of the Congo with the fresh information he had procured during his wonderful journey across Africa. In one of the letters published in the *Daily Telegraph* after his return to Europe, he called prominent attention to the importance of the Congo; and the following passage merits quotation:—"I am persuaded that this mighty river-way will become in the course of time a political question. Up to the present time no European Power has asserted the right to control this river. Portugal, it is true, lays claim to it because she discovered the mouth of this body of water, but the Great Powers, England, France, and the United States, refuse to admit this pretension. If I did not fear to chill, by the length of my letters, the interest which you entertain for Africa and this superb river, I could adduce many arguments to prove that the immediate solution of such an important question would be an act of high policy. It would be easy for me to show that the Power which makes itself mistress of the Congo must absorb, despite the Cataracts, all the commerce of the immense basin which expands itself behind that river. This water-way is, and will remain, the great commercial route, towards the west, of Central Africa."

The King of the Belgians was very much struck by that passage, and grasped at once the full significance of the discovery of the Congo. He caused an invitation to be sent to Mr. Stanley, who proceeded to Brussels. After some discussions, in which a considerable number of geographical authorities and of men distinguished in the world of commerce and finance took part, a plan of action was decided on, and its execution was entrusted to Mr. Stanley. The work was to be carried on by a distinct body from the International Association. This new organisation bore the title of the Committee for studying the Upper Congo, but before long it was changed into the International Association of the Congo.

It possessed a nominal capital of £40,000, but this sum was very soon expended, and the King defrayed out of his own private fortune all the heavy expenses of the undertaking over a long period of years.

Stanley's plan was, briefly put, to establish along the banks of the Congo a line of stations which would serve as bases for further operations, and as the means of controlling and capturing the commerce of the Congo basin. Commerce was to be the agency employed for the suppression of the slave trade, and at the same time it was to bring some tangible reward in its train. Stanley left Belgium at the end of January 1879 for Zanzibar, with the view of collecting there his comrades on the earlier journey, while the expedition fitted out in Belgium was directed to the mouth of the Congo, there to await his arrival. This expedition was composed of two steamboats, *En Avant* and the *Royal*, two screw-steamers, *La Belgique* and the *Hope*, one screw-barge, the *Young Africa*, and two steel lighters, all of which rendered excellent service in establishing steam navigation on the Congo. The personnel of the expedition was composed of five Belgians, two Englishmen, two Danes, and one Frenchman. The black force numbered sixty-eight Askaris from Zanzibar and seventy-two Kabindas. Carriers were engaged as required along the river. For the first few weeks Boma remained the headquarters of the expedition, while Mr. Stanley proceeded up the river on board the *Hope*, to ascertain the highest point of navigation below the Cataracts. The result of this reconnaissance was the founding of the station of Vivi, for which the sum of eight hundred francs was paid down in cloth, and a rent of fifty francs per month was guaranteed.

Great care had to be taken not to offend the Portuguese, who then held the mouth of the Congo, and Vivi was only fortified with a few Krupp mountain-guns to make it secure against any sudden attack on the part of

the natives. Six months were occupied in the completion of the station at this place. The next task proved still more arduous. It consisted in constructing a cart-road from Vivi to Isanghila, over fifty miles higher up the river. It required twelve months' incessant labour to construct the road and to convey along it the steamers in sections and the merchandise and stores of the expedition. At Isanghila Stanley founded another station similar to that of Vivi, and, availing himself of the short section of navigable river between that place and Manyanga, he floated two of his steamers and reached Manyanga by water. There he founded a third station, while the task of opening up the last link from Manyanga to Stanley Pool, where the open water-way begins, was in the first place entrusted to Lieutenant Braconnier, a Belgian officer. The arrival of Mr. Linders, a German contractor, with some workmen, greatly facilitated the completion of the work, and Stanley soon attained striking evidence of the perils of any delay, by learning that M. de Brazza, the French traveller, had appeared on the northern shores of the Pool, and founded Brazzaville in the name and under the flag of France. This step was promptly answered by the founding of a station on the plain of Kintamo, close to the margin of the lake, and destined to become the administrative capital of Central Africa. To this head station was given the appropriate name of Leopoldville, in honour of the promoter of the whole undertaking.

The year 1882 had now commenced; and as Central Africa was no longer an object of indifference, but might even be termed extremely coveted by several European Powers, or at all events their representatives, the paramount consideration was speed in the floating of the Association's flag on the Upper Congo. In April 1882, therefore, Mr. Stanley left Leopoldville on board the *En Avant*, and steamed as far as the territory of the chief Gobila, "the most sympathetic chief of the Congo."

With him he signed a treaty allowing the formation of a station at Msuata, forty miles above the Pool; and this task was given to M. Janssens, one of the Belgian officers. On his way, Mr. Stanley had been struck by the appearance of the Kassai, one of the chief affluents of the Congo, and he determined to explore it, despite the sinister predictions of the blacks. The trip up the Kassai River resulted, through the explorer following the Mfini instead of the main branch, in the discovery of the lake, to which he gave the name of Leopold the Second. With this terminated the first part of Stanley's mission on the Congo; for ill-health, and the desire to report personally as to the dangers that might ensue from M. de Brazza's plans, induced him to return to Europe.

During his absence the command was entrusted to Captain Hanssens, who established new stations at Bolobo and Kuamouth; and with the view of preparing for eventualities, many fresh places were nominally seized or occupied in the Kuiliu basin, north of the Lower Congo. But as it would only tend to confuse the reader, there is no necessity to enter into the details of operations which had no permanent influence. In February 1883 Stanley was back at his post, and, having put together three steamers on Stanley Pool, prepared to carry the flag of the Association far beyond the limits it had attained. But at this moment a series of misfortunes clouded the affairs of the undertaking. Two stations, those at Bolobo and Kimpoko, were burned to the ground, and their garrisons slaughtered. Janssens, one of the most promising of the Belgian lieutenants, perished in a flood on the Congo. Notwithstanding these reverses, Stanley continued his journey, founding stations at suitable points like the crossing of the Equator, and the mouths of important rivers like the Aruwimi, and finally halting at Stanley Falls, where he succeeded in purchasing the island Usana Rosani, which seemed to offer a secure station. From this place Stanley

addressed a letter to the Belgian officer at Karema, the station established, as has been seen, on Lake Tanganyika from the side of Zanzibar. With this incident Mr. Stanley's work on the Congo was brought to a conclusion. He had in the course of five years founded a number of stations (some unsuitable, as experience showed, some of the greatest value, between Vivi and Stanley Falls), and he had set an example of indefatigable energy.

In January 1884 the arrangement was completed, by which General Gordon, in fulfilment of a promise given many years before to the King of the Belgians, accepted the command on the Congo, and the date of his departure had been fixed when, in an evil hour for everybody concerned, that heroic soldier was induced to ask the King to concur in his further postponing the execution of his promise, so that he might proceed to Khartoum. In the spring of the year Sir Francis de Winton was appointed to succeed Mr. Stanley on the Congo. During this period the two Belgian officers, Captain Hanssens and Lieutenant Coquilhat, rendered signal service in consolidating the position on the Congo. The former was for some time in actual command, and displayed an ability, energy, and high-mindedness that secured for him general admiration. Unfortunately, he fell a victim to excessive zeal and sense of duty. On one occasion he had pacified a hostile tribe by moving amongst them with nothing in his hands but his pipe and tobacco-pouch, and by shaking the blacks by their hands. His colleague, Coquilhat, was a man of the same type, and did excellent work among the warlike Bangalas, besides writing an admirable account of *Life on the Upper Congo*. Coquilhat, unlike Hanssens, returned to Europe, when he contributed much to the general knowledge of the Congo; but, on being sent out again as Vice-Governor-General of the Congo, he had the misfortune to contract a fatal illness before he commenced his work. These men, and many

other Belgian officers, contributed with their lives to the creation of the great national work on the Equator.

While this progress towards peace and prosperity was being effected on the Congo itself, an entirely new region had been opened up by the navigation of the Kassai, which shares with the Lomami the right to be considered the most important affluent of the Congo on its left bank. As already described, Mr. Stanley had steamed up part of it, but, departing from its course, had followed the Mfini to Lake Leopold the Second. The German Dr. Pogge had also travelled along it to its junction with the Lulua. At the end of 1883 it was determined to thoroughly explore the river, and the King both provided the funds for the exploration and retained the services of the German officer Wissmann, who had just made a reputation by a journey across Africa from St. Paul de Loanda to Sadani. Having made his way by caravan route to the territory of Mukenga, the king of the Balubas, he founded, with the co-operation of that chief, the station of Luluabourg on the banks of the Lulua. This important post, in the midst of a fertile region, and occupying a salubrious spot on the sixth parallel of south latitude, has been termed the Paradise of the Congo. There remained for Lieutenant Wissmann to establish the navigability of the river, and its connection, if not identity, with the Kassai. In accomplishing this part of his task, the explorer was largely aided by the cordial co-operation of the African chief. Mukenga not only built a large canoe for the descent of the river, but offered to accompany the white man himself.

In this canoe, escorted by twenty small boats, Wissmann, with three other officers in the same service, made the descent of the river to Kuamouth, the point of entrance into the Congo. He passed on the way the points of confluence between the Lulua and the Kassai on the left hand, and the Sankuru on the right; and still

lower down he saw the entrance to the Mfini, up which Mr. Stanley had proceeded. With the exception of the Bakutas, a tribe of cannibals, Wissmann found the inhabitants peaceful and well-disposed. The discovery of the navigability of the Kassai, and at least one of its upper courses in the Lulua, was rightly regarded as of the greatest importance, and Sir Francis de Winton despatched the steamer *Stanley* up it to convey to their home the Balubas, who had helped Wissmann to success.

The next move in this quarter was the despatch, in 1885, of Dr. Wolf, who had accompanied Wissmann, for the purpose of exploring the Sankuru. Having founded the station of Luebo, below the point of junction, he steamed up the Sankuru on board the *En Avant*. This stream was found to be perfectly navigable, and in places two miles wide. He traced its course to the falls above Mona-Kachich, where navigation ceases to be possible, and which are now known by his name. During this tour he met only one hostile tribe, the Basongos, who threatened to capture the whole party, but who were deterred from executing their purpose by the simple expedient of firing off a pistol close to the ear of their terrified chief. On his return journey he was rejoined by Lieutenant Wissmann, and together they explored the upper course of the Kassai, reaching the highest point of navigation at Wissmann Falls, a little north of the sixth parallel, and about sixty miles distant from the point of junction with the Lulua.

Reference was made to the founding of Luluabourg, and in 1886 Captain Adolph de Macar was sent to establish the station which was to control this important region. He succeeded with inadequate means in his task, and the conditions under which he worked may be gathered from the fact that for a whole year he did not see a white face. His task was not altogether pacific. He had to carry on warlike operations with several hostile

tribes, and, amidst constant perils boldly faced, to spread increasing respect for the white man. In the midst of his other work, he found time to explore the Sankuru for upwards of three hundred miles, with a care and thoroughness not primarily attained, and he advanced the opinion, for which much might be said, that in this stream was to be found the true upper course of the Kassai.

If the course of the Kassai on the left bank of the Congo was an important question, closely affecting matters of commerce and administration, as well as of interest to geographers, that of the Ubangi, the northern affluent of the great river, was scarcely less important. Dr. Schweinfurth's discovery of the Uelle, near Lake Albert, had given rise to the natural supposition that it might find its way into the Congo. The German traveller had been content to make the easy suggestion that the Uelle flowed into Lake Tchad, but Mr. Stanley had rejected this, and identified it with the Aruwimi, while, at the period of which we are speaking, a Belgian geographical expert, M. Wauters, had put forward the theory that the Uelle was the upper course of the Ubangi. It is proper to state that both Schweinfurth and Mr. Stanley came round to this theory long before it had been proved a fact.

The task of solving this question was entrusted in 1886 to Captain Van Gele. He was met at the outset of his journey by the protest of a chief on the left bank of the river, who had placed himself under the protection of France, but he was able to show that the same chief had signed a treaty with Belgian officers two years earlier. The Belgian officer then proceeded on his way. The Ubangi was at the time in flood, and found easily navigable, until at Zongo, near the fourth parallel of north latitude, rapids were encountered, through which the Belgian officer made a courageous but futile attempt to force his way. Some months later he renewed the

attempt, when he succeeded in transporting his steamer to above the Zongo Falls, where he again found a clear course. On this occasion, Van Gele and his comrade Lieutenant Liénart succeeded in reaching a point within one degree of that attained by Junker, a Russian traveller, on the Uelle, and they would have covered that section also but for the hostility of the Yakomas, a tribe that showed no fear of firearms. On the return journey all the cataracts were easily crossed, owing to the fall of the river. One of them was even too shallow to float the boat, which had to be dragged through the bed of the river.

In the midst of these successful explorations and discoveries the Belgians experienced one considerable reverse of fortune. Stanley Falls, the then presumed limit of unbroken navigation from Stanley Pool, represented their extreme station on the Congo. It was from it that Mr. Stanley had sent the message to the officers on the Lake Tanganyika, and before his departure he had established there, on an island, a station that commanded the Falls. The officer in charge of the station at the time of the occurrence was an Englishman named Deane, and his assistant was a Belgian officer named Dubois. The neighbours of this island were not negroes, but the Arabs, who were the slave hunters and slave dealers of Central Africa. The resources of the Belgians did not permit of their yet declaring their intention to extirpate the slave trade, and consequently a temporising policy had to be pursued. As a matter of fact, their relations with their Arab neighbours were excellent, and only an unforeseen event produced what was perhaps an inevitable collision. One day in August 1886 a slave girl, who had been ill-treated, claimed the protection of the station. Her Arab master came to recover her, and, after exacting a promise that she should not be ill-used, Mr. Deane surrendered her. Three days later she again appeared in the station, showing the

marks of horribly bad treatment. Again the Arab came to claim his property. Mr. Deane attempted to arrange the affair amicably by the purchase of the slave, but, on the Arab refusing to settle the matter in this way, Mr. Deane very properly refused to surrender the girl to further cruelty and certain death. In taking this step, Mr. Deane was going beyond the letter of his instructions, and it must also be recorded that there were special reasons in his own position that might have justified his giving way on this occasion, under the plea of expediency or necessity. The only steamer likely to arrive for many months had arrived a few days before, and departed, and it had brought a reinforcement neither of men nor of powder and shot. Still Mr. Deane did not hesitate. He openly refused to give up the unfortunate slave, and Lieutenant Dubois nobly supported him.

The Arabs, unlike the blacks, were afraid of neither the white man nor his weapons. Five hundred of them attacked the station, which was heroically defended by the two officers and their handful of Haussas and Bangalas during three days. On the third day the ammunition was mostly exhausted, and the bulk of the garrison, deserting their officers, escaped during the night in some canoes. Mr. Deane, seeing no possibility of holding the station, abandoned it, having first emptied all the oil in it to make the building inflammable, and, having also laid a train to the magazine, he, Dubois, and a few still faithful Haussas, swam to the southern shore of the river. The destruction of the station was complete, so that the Arabs gained nothing by their success; but Dubois was unfortunately drowned in the attempt to reach the river bank. Mr. Deane paid the following tribute to his colleague:—"In the worst part of the struggle he used to send me little notes, written on his knee, perhaps, to ask for fresh ammunition or for something else. These notes were in beautiful caligraphy, and showed no trace of the least

emotion. You may be proud to have such men in your (the Belgian) army; there are none better in any other."

The Belgians did not attempt to recover Stanley Falls for the time, but when Mr. Stanley passed through the Congo region on his way to relieve Emin Pasha he was authorised by the King to propose an arrangement with Tippo Tip for the government of the Stanley Falls district. Tippo Tip bound himself to prevent all slave hunting and slave dealing below the Falls, and to prevent any attacks on the natives. In return for this he received a fixed monthly payment, but he had also to admit the residence of a Belgian officer, who could carry on his correspondence with Government and make the necessary reports. After some hesitation, Tippo Tip—a name signifying "winking the eye," conferred on this arch-merchant and slave dealer from the habit he had contracted, but whose true name was Hamed-ben-Mohamed—accepted the post, and the arrangement worked well enough for some years. It enabled the Government to husband its resources, and to postpone, until it was ready to meet the emergency, the inevitable struggle with the Arab slave dealers of the Upper Congo.

At the time of the murder of Major Barttelot, who commanded the rear guard of the Stanley Expedition for the relief of Emin, it was freely believed in England that this murder was due to the treachery of Tippo Tip, but the evidence clearly shows that in this matter Tippo Tip was maligned, and that he had nothing to do with it. The delay in the arrival of the porters promised by Tippo Tip at the camp at Yambuya gave rise to suspicion, but the Arab governor was able to clear himself. The inquiry into Major Barttelot's murder showed that the gallant officer did not understand the customs of his black followers; that he was easily irritated; and that the noise made by their accustomed dancing and singing at night had so disturbed him that he had given orders prohibiting it. It is not surprising that these orders were disobeyed.

and he was shot by a soldier whose wife he had threatened with punishment for such disobedience. The soldier was subsequently shot by a court of which Tippu Tip was a member.

At this point it will be convenient to close our sketch of the early Belgian Expeditions in Central Africa. In point of time it is correct to do so, because most of them were carried out before the Berlin Conference and the founding of the Congo State, and such of them as overlapped the period were so evidently the sequence of what had already happened that it would have been inconvenient to have excluded them. Moreover, the point of division is clearly marked by the necessary halt in the progress of Belgian authority up the Congo. It has reached the limits of Arab power, and is not ready for the death grapple with the enemies of humanity. It has to bide its time, to temporise in its treatment of the problem which, according to some, the Association and the State had only been called into existence to solve, and, in the meanwhile, to husband and develop its resources. When the story of Belgian military exploit and conquest in Central Africa is renewed, the situation will be changed. There will be no infirmity of purpose; the consciousness of duty will be not less clearly revealed than that of power, and the Arab invaders will be treated as the implacable foes of the black race and of civilisation until their swords have been turned into ploughshares, and the passion of the *razzia* appeals to them no more.

The practical lesson taught by the various expeditions, passed very lightly in review, is that the only one of all the Powers represented at the Brussels Conference that was seriously in earnest, and that had a plan, was Belgium, the smallest of them all. Very soon after its conclusion, several Governments manifested a desire to profit by what their explorers obtained. France was glad enough to accept the spoil of M. de Brazza, Germany

of Lieutenant Wissmann ; but their absorptions signified no gain to civilisation, for they were little more than colourings of the map, and not in any degree coming under the head of effective occupation. But the Belgians went to work in a very thorough and systematic manner, establishing their stations on Lake Tanganyika and along the course of the Congo and its affluents. They thus took root in the country ; and if their progress has sometimes seemed slow, it has had all the advantages of thoroughness and stability. Where they fixed their stations peace followed, and with it came commerce, security, and cessation of the slave trade. It must always be remembered that they did not attempt what they had not some good ground for believing they could perform. For this reason they deferred the struggle with the Arabs. The national caution here stood them in good stead, because a premature war might have been fatal in two opposite manners. A successful war might have been purchased too dearly by exhausting the resources, practically limited for many years to the King's private fortune, and an unsuccessful war would have been not only costly, but destructive of the white man's reputation, while it would have greatly extended the area of Arab control and incursion.

The work actually accomplished by the expeditions between the years 1877 and 1885 must be pronounced very considerable, and would alone give the Belgians a strong claim to be regarded as successful colonisers. Their posts were established within that period from 5 degrees of north latitude to 6 degrees of south, while their authority covered 10 degrees of longitude. From the East Coast they had also laid a firm hold on Lake Tanganyika. The few steamers they had placed on the river above the Cataracts had also established the farthest points of navigation on some of the principal affluents of the main stream, and the result had been to demonstrate the existence of convenient water-ways in every

direction. The stations of Leopoldville and Luluabourg, to mention only two of those that are to-day of the first importance, had been founded. A carriage road, supplemented in parts by a Decauville railway, had been made through the districts adjacent to the Cataracts in the lower river. A trade had sprung up in ivory and rubber—the two staple products of Central Africa. The black man had been taught the lesson that the white man had come as his friend, and would in the course of time deliver him finally from his tyrants. The white man had learnt that, although life was exposed to many uncertainties, it could still be supported, and even enjoyed, under the Equator. The Belgians had lost many promising officers, but others took their places; and the attempt to found a vast colony was not abandoned in despair through either public or private affliction. The King began to feel confident that his great work would bear fruit, provided only that Europe would permit his tree the necessary time to grow and to strike deep its roots.

CHAPTER III

THE FOUNDING OF THE STATE

WHEN the first Brussels Conference was held Europe was indifferent to Central Africa, but a few short years had worked a change. King Leopold had now to maintain his possessions in the Congo region against the aroused cupidity of the Great Powers. France had come down to the Congo at Brazzaville, Portugal had resolved to assert her pretensions to control the course of the river because one of her navigators had happened to discover its mouth in the fifteenth century, Germany had set her heart on a dominion in East Africa, and even England's attitude was more than doubtful, seeing that it had given its support to the pretensions of Portugal. If these elements of uncertainty were apparent in 1882, no one who looked ahead could doubt that, as time went on, they would increase in number and significance, until at last the International Association of the Congo amid the Great Powers would be as the earthen pot against the iron, and would share the proverbial fate of the weaker. It therefore became clear to King Leopold, that, having secured for his idea a practical form and the chance of realisation, he had now, and without delay, to obtain for his work a definite existence, and the full recognition by Europe and the United States of America of his right to carry it on, and to retain what he accomplished. The inception of the undertaking was his, and a solid basis for future operations had been acquired by the free expenditure of his

treasure. Was he to lose the just reward of his labours, or to see it reduced to a minimum, by the arbitrary decree of more powerful neighbours and rivals? Political sagacity, not to speak of ordinary prudence, dictated the measures taken to clear up the situation which have now to be described, and which resulted in the founding of the Congo State.

The establishment of the French flag on Stanley Pool was a significant event, but it did not stand alone. The progress of Mr. Stanley on the Congo, founding stations, purchasing territory, and signing treaties,—all of which were drawn up in the most correct form by the King's thoughtful prevision,—caused some heart-burnings in France; and there, above everywhere else, the question was freely raised and discussed: What was the status of the International Association? Was it qualified to exercise sovereign rights? Were its acquisitions mere purchases of property, or did they represent absolute cessions of territory according to the provisions of international law? If these questions had been answered by the Colonial party in France, then the King of the Belgians would not have been accomplishing a patriotic work, for he would merely have been acting as the *avant-coureur* of France, and doing her work for her. It is true that precedents might have been found to support the rights of the International Association, and it would have been far from the first or the last corporate body to exercise sovereign authority. But when clashing views prevail, the safest course, if time will allow, is to review the position, and to re-establish it on a clear and generally recognised basis. In this case, thanks to the King's promptness, there was sufficient time to regulate the status of the Congo dominion.

The questions at issue with Portugal were more pressing. Portugal claimed her historic right over the whole of the mouth of the Congo, and consequently the International Association had no unfettered outlet to the sea.

Banana and Boma were Portuguese stations, and Vivi, opposite the now more important Matadi, was the first port of the Association. Portugal's claims in themselves were inconvenient and an obstacle, but they might have been overcome. The unexpected conclusion—for Lord Granville had previously declared that he recognised no rights held by Portugal over the mouth of the Congo—of a convention between England and Portugal, recognising those claims in an extended form, completely altered the situation. In return for concessions elsewhere, Great Britain recognised Portuguese authority between $5^{\circ} 12'$ and 8° of south latitude; and had that convention been upheld in its integrity, a death-blow would have been dealt the International Association of the Congo. This convention, dated 26th February 1884, was one of the most unfortunate diplomatic experiences of Great Britain, and showed extraordinary ineptitude on the part of the Foreign Office. It was attacked in Parliament and the press, but its reception by the other Powers was still more hostile. On the 13th March France declared that she would not be bound by it, Germany followed suit on 18th April, and thus was laid the basis of that Franco-German *entente* which was to control the Berlin Conference, and to re-shape the map of Africa for the benefit of these Powers. Great Britain had proposed to control the navigation of the Congo by an Anglo-Portuguese Commission. Germany and France agreed on 5th June 1884 to combine for the purpose of placing the Congo under an international control.

While these preliminaries were being arranged, the King of the Belgians had made an appeal to the loyalty of the British Government to suspend the ratification of the convention, and had suggested the despatch of a mission to the West Coast for the purpose of studying on the spot the degree of validity that should attach to the treaties concluded by His Majesty's representatives within



SEA VIEW AT MOUTH OF THE CONGO.

the region so lightly proposed to be handed over to the Portuguese. To this very reasonable suggestion it was impossible for the Foreign Office to object; and General Sir Frederic Goldsmid, a highly accomplished officer, who had taken part in several frontier delimitations in the East, and whose linguistic attainments were remarkable, was sent on a mission of inquiry to the Congo. His report was to the effect that he had found all the treaties signed by the Association with the chiefs holding the mouth of the river in perfect order, and that the pretensions of the Portuguese in that quarter were consequently without the least justification.

If the policy of the Liberal Government was thus shaken by the declarations of some of the other Powers, and by the facts brought by its delegate to its own knowledge, other events were happening elsewhere to strengthen the position of the Congo Association, and to show that general opinion was opposed to any arrangement that would permit of Portugal—the most backward and least progressive of the colonising powers in Africa—fettering the good work it had commenced. On the 22nd of April 1884 the United States of America signed a convention recognising the Association as a properly constituted State, thus setting an example which Europe subsequently followed. France was the first European Power to take this step in an informal manner in April 1884, but the difficulties of the hour were then so many and so pressing, that in order to obtain it the Association made, by Colonel Strauch's letter of 23rd April 1884, a declaration to the French Government that "it would never cede its possessions to another Power without a prior understanding with France; and that, if it were compelled to alienate any of its territory, France should have the right of pre-emption." As it is impossible to suppose that the Belgian nation will ever voluntarily decline to take over the great and valuable colony which their

King has procured for them in the Congo State, this convention is never likely to possess any practical value, but its existence, subject to the waiving of the right in favour of Belgium by the convention of 1887, must none the less be noted.

A lull of some months followed, but Prince Bismarck made, in the course of the spring, several statements to the effect that Germany was sympathetic to "the Belgian enterprises on the Congo which had for their object the founding of an independent State." On the 8th of November the German Government gave its formal recognition to the Congo Association as an independent and friendly State. By that time Germany and France had come to a complete agreement on the subject, and, on the same day as he formally recognised its existence and its flag, Prince Bismarck sent invitations to all the Powers to take part in an International Conference at Berlin, for the purpose of regulating the African question. That invitation was generally accepted, and the course to be taken by the British Government had been simplified by its own voluntary withdrawal on 26th June 1884 from the convention it had four months earlier proposed to conclude with Portugal.

Fourteen Powers in all agreed to take part in the Conference. They were, in the order of the protocol, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, the United States of America, France, Great Britain, Italy, Holland, Portugal, Russia, Sweden and Norway, and Turkey. Most of the Powers deputed only one representative, but Germany was represented by four members, including Prince Bismarck; Belgium and Portugal by two each; and the United States also deputed a second representative after the first sittings. The first protocol bears, consequently, nineteen signatures—the same number as the Final Act, which one of the German representatives, Count P. Hatzfeldt, was prevented

by illness from signing. It is unnecessary to give all the names of the delegates; but it will suffice to say that Germany was represented by Prince Bismarck, Count Hatzfeldt, Herr Busch, and another; France by Baron de Courcel; and England by Sir Edward Malet; while Belgium was represented by Count Van der Straeten Ponthoz, the Minister at the German Court, and Baron Lambermont, a statesman and diplomatist of great ability, whose services in helping to found the Congo State were of the highest value to his sovereign. As further evidence of the preponderant part Germany and France took in the Conference, it may be mentioned that the three secretaries were the Councillor of the French Embassy at Berlin, and two officials of the German Foreign Office, one of them being Count William Bismarck.

The Conference met on 15th November 1884, and concluded its sittings on 26th February 1885. There were in all ten meetings of the Conference, of which the first was in the main, and the last in its entirety, formal. At the first sitting Prince Bismarck was unanimously elected President, a post which he accepted, subject to the condition that if illness or his other work prevented his being present, one of his colleagues should take his place. As a matter of fact, Prince Bismarck presided only at the first and final sittings, his place being taken at first by Count Hatzfeldt, and subsequently by Herr Busch. The direction of the Conference remained, therefore, in the hands of the German representatives.

Before describing the General Act resulting from the Conference, the successive meetings and their protocols may be passed lightly in review. At the first meeting Prince Bismarck defined the objects of the Conference as follows:—

“The Imperial Government has been guided by the conviction that all the Governments invited here share

the desire to associate the natives of Africa with civilisation, by opening up the interior of that continent to commerce, by furnishing the natives with the means of instruction, by encouraging missions and enterprises so that useful knowledge may be disseminated, and by paving the way to the suppression of slavery, and especially of the slave trade among the blacks, the gradual abolition of which was declared to be, as far back as the Vienna Congress in 1814, the sacred duty of all the Powers. The interest which all the civilised nations take in the material development of Africa assures their co-operation in the task of regulating the commercial relations with that part of the world. The course followed for a number of years in the relations of the Western Powers with the countries of Eastern Asia having up to this moment given the best results by restraining commercial rivalry within the limits of legitimate competition, the Government of His Majesty the German Emperor has considered it possible to recommend to the Powers to apply to Africa, in the form appropriate to that continent, the same regimen, founded on the equality of the rights and the solidarity of the interests of all the commercial nations."

Having made this admirable definition of international rights, Prince Bismarck went on to say that there was a perfect accord with France on this subject, and that the central idea of the Conference was to facilitate access to Central Africa. For the moment, the practical question was to establish freedom of trade at the mouth and in the basin of the Congo, and on that point the German Government had drawn up the project of a declaration as to the freedom of trade in that part of Africa. There were to be equal rights for every flag, no monopolies and no preferential duties. When Prince Bismarck concluded, Sir Edward Malet rose and read an important declaration on behalf of the British Government. If England, it said, had taken little part in the inception of the Conference,

there was no Power in the world which had done so much on behalf of the objects that the German Government affected to have at heart, and the British representative pointed out that the warm support of his country and Government could be relied on for proposals which had always formed part of their policy. At the same time he was instructed to express the hope that the attention of the Conference would not be exclusively given to matters of commerce, but that the welfare of the natives would be taken into account. Freedom of trade should be restricted to legitimate articles of trade, or the natives would lose as much as they would gain. The main difficulty of the Conference, in the speaker's mind, would be, not to secure a unanimous consent for general principles, but to provide the means of carrying those principles into effect. It was also necessary to make some reservations as to the formalities proposed, in order to establish the validity of effective new occupations on the coasts of Africa.

At the second sitting the Portuguese representative made a declaration to the effect that his country had introduced the germs of civilisation into Africa, and that his Government cordially hoped that the increase of commerce would promote peace and the rights of humanity. The Italian Ambassador proposed the restriction of the importation of arms and spirits into Africa, and the American representative called attention to the part his country, in the person of Mr. Stanley, had played in the opening of Central Africa, and to the fact that it had been the first to recognise the work accomplished by that great European philanthropist, the King of the Belgians. Before the sitting closed, the question as to "what territories constituted the basin of the Congo and its affluents" arose, and was referred to a Commission of the experts of the eight Powers directly interested in Africa.

At the third sitting the Conference ratified the follow-

ing definitions :—"The basin of the Congo is delimited by the crests of the contiguous basins, to wit, the basins in particular of the Niari, the Ogowé, the Schari, and the Nile, on the north ; by the Lake Tanganyika, on the east ; by the crests of the basins of the Zambesi and the Logé, on the south. It comprises consequently all the territories drained by the Congo and its affluents, including Lake Tanganyika and its eastern tributaries." The Italian Ambassador having suggested that some doubt might arise in the future as to whether Tanganyika was included in



M. EMILE BANNING.

the basin or not, the Conference reaffirmed the fact that the lake with its tributaries was so included. Two other questions were submitted for preliminary discussion and definition to the Commission of experts presided over by Baron de Courcel. Baron Lambemont acted as reporter of this Commission, and he was greatly assisted in the discharge of this part of his delicate and difficult duties by his able colleague, M. Emile Banning, whose numer-

ous articles and political treatises on African questions have gained him a high reputation throughout Europe, and whose recent death has left a void in Belgian society.

The first of these questions was : What territories should be added to the natural basin of the Congo on the West Coast, that is to say, on the Atlantic north and south of the mouth of that river, in the interests of commercial communications ? The second was : Whether any reason existed to place part or all of the territory east of the Congo basin in the direction of the Indian

Ocean under similar conditions of freedom of trade? The reader will gather that the first provided the practical answer to the Portuguese pretended right to control the mouth of the Congo. The Commission proposed that the free zone on the Atlantic should extend from Sette-Camma to the mouth of the Logé; and this proposition, with the substitution of a parallel of latitude in place of the uncertain site of Sette-Camma, was eventually endorsed by the Conference. It thus secured for the King the free outlet to the ocean essential for the success, and even for the existence, of his work that the Anglo-Portuguese Convention would have prevented. On the last question the Commission reported that a similar region east of Tanganyika for freedom of trade should be created, subject only to the respect due to the rights of the sovereignties existing in that region.

One of the chief remaining questions for the Conference was the decision to be taken as to some general line of policy for the supervision of the slave trade in all its branches, and for the prevention of the introduction of fresh evils among the blacks by the importation of spirits. On this part of the question Baron Lambermont drew up a report, which commanded general admiration and approval at the hands of the members of the Conference; but, as his colleague, Count Van der Straeten Ponthoz, said, the evil demanded some more practical and vigorous treatment than the mere emission of a vow. Having placed before the Conference his own personal observation of the effect on the Indian races of North and South America of the use of ardent spirits, he continued to remind his colleagues, that whereas alcoholism was causing the disappearance of the red man, "the more robust negro would not succumb physically to drunkenness, but he would succumb morally. If the Conference did not save him from this vice, he would become a monster who would devour the good work of the Con-

ference." He therefore proposed that the following paragraph should form part of the decrees of the Conference :—

"In expressing the wish that an *entente* should be established between the Governments to regulate the commerce of spirituous liquors, the Conference does not consider that it has entirely fulfilled its mission of humanity. It wishes it to be understood that it leaves the completion of its task to the negotiations that the Governments represented at the Conference would undertake, while allowing for the circumstances necessary to reconcile the interests of commerce with the imprescriptible rights of the African population and the principles of humanity throughout the whole extent of the Congo territory."

The practical deduction from these phrases and these efforts is, that the Belgian representatives placed themselves in the van of the demand to suppress or reduce to a minimum the supply of spirituous liquors in the Congo basin. Their attitude was also very much more significant than that of the other Powers. It was not merely the expression of a pious opinion or generous sentiment. The American Minister was perhaps the loudest in his demands on behalf of humanity, but the responsibility America would have to accept was little, and the part it could take in carrying out the decisions of the Conference was none at all. Even among African Powers the immediate responsibility was little, and the part they had to play less, or concealed in the future. But the position of the Belgians was very different. They were not merely responsible in the chief part of Central Africa, but they were exposed to the full criticism of Europe. Yet Baron Lambert and Count Van der Straeten Ponthoz went even farther in their suggestions than Sir Edward Malet or the American Minister. In these facts may be found further evidence, if any is needed, of the noble and

philanthropic spirit in which the Congo State was founded.

With a view to ensure the neutrality of the projected State, it was proposed to exclude the possibility of war from the Congo basin, and the principle of arbitration was so far adopted as to call for reassertion of the clause in the Treaty of Paris, to the effect that if any two of the signatories had a dispute they would, before indulging in hostilities, solicit the intervention of a third and friendly Power. It is also right to observe that towards the end of the Conference some of the delegates, following the example set in the earlier stages by the Turkish Ambassador, made a point of laying down that the conclusions to which they gave their assent applied only to that part of the world and of Africa. The Russian Ambassador was very explicit on this point; so also was Baron de Courcel, who was good enough to inform the Conference that Madagascar remained outside the present stipulations.

With these specific references to matters that arose during the course of the Conference, we may now turn to its conclusion and the consequences that followed. Baron Lambermont was entrusted with the drafting of the Final Act; and while this was in progress the International Association of the Congo had the satisfaction of signing conventions with almost all the Powers represented at Berlin, by which they recognised its flag and status as a friendly and sovereign State. The notification of the conclusion of these treaties was made to the Conference by Colonel Strauch, President of the International Association, on 23rd February 1885, the day that it met for its last business sitting. The President, in making the announcement to the meeting, gave expression to the following sentiments:—

“GENTLEMEN,—I feel sure I am the interpreter of the unanimous sentiment of the Conference in saluting as a happy event the communication made to us on the subject

of the almost completely unanimous recognition of the International Association of the Congo. All of us here render justice to the lofty object of the work to which His Majesty the King of the Belgians has attached his name ; we all know the efforts and the sacrifices by means of which he has brought it to the point where it is to-day ; we all entertain the wish that the most complete success may crown an enterprise that must so usefully promote the views which have directed the Conference."

These words were echoed by all the representatives of the Powers. Baron de Coureel said, "The new State owes its origin to the generous aspirations and the enlightened initiation of a prince surrounded by the respect of Europe." The Italian Ambassador added his testimony to the merit of "a sovereign who for eight years past, with a rare constancy worthy of the greatest praise, had spared neither trouble nor personal sacrifices for the success of a generous and philanthropic enterprise." Sir Edward Malet spoke as follows :—"The part which the Queen's Government has taken in the recognition of the flag of the Association as that of a friendly Government, warrants me in expressing the satisfaction with which we regard the constitution of this new State, due to the initiative of His Majesty the King of the Belgians. During long years the King, dominated by a purely philanthropic idea, has spared nothing, neither personal effort nor pecuniary sacrifice, which could contribute to the realisation of his object. Yet the world at large regarded these efforts with an eye of almost complete indifference. Here and there His Majesty attracted some sympathy, but it was somehow rather the sympathy of condolence than that of encouragement. People said that the enterprise was beyond his resources, that it was too great for him to achieve success. We now see that the King was right, and that the idea he pursued was not Utopian. He has brought it to a happy conclusion, not without difficulties, but the very difficulties have made the success

all the more striking. While rendering to His Majesty this homage by recognising all the difficulties that he has surmounted, we salute the new-born State with the greatest cordiality, and we express the sincere desire to see it flourish and grow under his ægis."

In the following speech, summing up the work of the Conference, and delivered at its final meeting on 26th February 1885, Prince Bismarck added his tribute; but the general interest of his discourse justifies its full quotation:—

"GENTLEMEN,—Our Conference, after long and laborious deliberations, has reached the end of its work, and I am happy to state that, thanks to your efforts, and to the spirit of conciliation which has presided at our negotiations, a complete agreement has been established on all the points of the programme which was submitted to us.

"The resolutions which we are on the point of sanctioning assure to the commerce of all nations free access to the centre of the African Continent. The guarantees with which commercial liberty in the basin of the Congo will be surrounded, and all the arrangements made in the Acts of Navigation for the Congo and the Niger, are of a nature to offer to the commerce and the industry of all nations the most favourable conditions for their development and security.

"By another series of provisions you have shown your solicitude for the moral and material well-being of the native populations, and there is room to hope that those principles, dictated by a spirit of practical wisdom, will bear fruit and will contribute to bestow on those populations the benefits of civilisation.

"The particular conditions under which are placed the vast regions that you have just opened to commercial enterprise have seemed to exact special guarantees for the maintenance of peace and public order. As a matter of fact, the evils of war would assume a particularly disastrous

character if the natives were led to take part in the conflicts of civilised Powers. Justly preoccupied with the dangers that such an eventuality would entail in the interests of commerce and of civilisation, you have sought the means of withdrawing a great part of the African Continent from the vicissitudes of general politics, by restraining these national rivalries to the pacific competition of commerce and industry.

“In the same category you have aimed at preventing the misunderstandings and contests to which new seizures of territory on the coasts of Africa might give rise. The declaration as to the formalities to be complied with, in order to make acquisitions of territory effective, has introduced into public right a new regulation, which will contribute in its degree to remove from international relations causes of dissension and conflict.

“The spirit of mutual good understanding which has distinguished your deliberations has equally presided over the negotiations which have taken place outside the Conference, with the object of regulating difficult questions of delimitation between the parties which exercise sovereign rights in the basin of the Congo, and which by the nature of their position are called upon to become the chief guardians of the work which we are about to sanction.

“I cannot touch on this subject without rendering my homage to the noble efforts of His Majesty the King of the Belgians, the founder of a work which is to-day recognised by almost all the Powers, and which by its consolidation may render precious services to the cause of humanity.

“Gentlemen, I am charged by His Majesty the Emperor and King, my august master, to express to you his warmest thanks for the part that each of you has taken in the happy accomplishment of the task of the Conference.

“I fulfil a final duty in making myself the mouthpiece of the gratitude that the Conference owes those of its members who have discharged the difficult labours of the

Commission, notably the Baron de Comreel and the Baron Lambermont. I also thank the delegates for the valuable assistance that they have afforded us, and I associate with the expression of that gratitude the Secretaries of the Conference, who by the precision of their work have facilitated our task.

“Gentlemen, the work of the Conference will be, like every human undertaking, susceptible of improvement and perfection; but it will mark, I hope, a step forward in the development of international relations, and will form a new link of solidarity between civilised nations.”

The text of the General Act of the Berlin Conference, so far as it relates to the Congo, is given in an appendix, but here it will make the subject clearer for the general reader if the principal heads of the matters discussed and adopted are recorded. Of the six branches of the subject one related to the Niger, and need not be considered.

1. A declaration relative to freedom of commerce in the basin of the Congo, its mouths, and the surrounding countries, with certain connected propositions.

2. A declaration concerning the traffic in slaves, and the operations which by land or by sea furnish slaves for the slave trade.

3. A declaration relative to the neutrality of the territories comprised in the conventional basin of the Congo.

4. An Act of Navigation of the Congo, which, while taking local circumstances into account, extends to that river, its affluents, and the waters which are assimilated to them, the general principles enunciated in the articles 108 to 116 of the Final Act of the Vienna Congress, which were intended to regulate between the signatories of that Act the free navigation of navigable courses of water separating or traversing several States,—principles conventionally applied since to rivers of Europe and America, and notably to the Danube, with the modifications laid

down by the Treaties of Paris of 1856, Berlin of 1878, and of London of 1871 and 1883.

6. A declaration introducing into international arrangements uniform regulations relating to occupations which may take place in the future on the coasts of the African Continent.

For the sake of absolute clearness, it will be well to re-state here that the Congo Independent State succeeded the Congo International Association founded by the King of the Belgians in 1883. The Association having obtained the recognition of its sovereignty, prior to the founding of the State, by successive treaties concluded in 1884 and 1885 with the United States and most of the European Powers, adhered on the 26th February 1885 to the resolutions of the Berlin Conference. These resolutions, gathered in a General Act, establish freedom of trade in the basin of the Congo, and declare the navigation absolutely free on the river Congo, its tributaries and the lakes and canals connected with the latter. They lay down rules for the protection of the natives and the suppression of the slave trade, and impose on the Powers who signed the Act the obligation of applying to the mediation of one or several friendly Governments should any serious contest occur concerning the territories of the conventional Congo basin. The following extract from the annual report of the Secretary of State to the King as Sovereign of the Congo State, in January 1897, defines very happily the precise manner in which the State came into existence and the scope of its work :—

“It is not less interesting to bring out the progress accomplished in the moral domain, since the treaties¹ con-

¹ The treaties referred to in this report were those with the United States of America, dated 22nd April 1884; Germany, 8th November; Great Britain, 16th December; Italy, 19th December; Austria-Hungary, 24th December; Holland, 27th December; Spain, 7th January 1885; France and Russia, both 5th February; Sweden and Norway, 10th February; Portugal, 14th February; Denmark and Belgium, 23rd February. The Berlin Act is

cluded with the Powers established the situation of the Congo International Association—which became in 1885 the Independent State of the Congo—and, by recognising its flag, consecrated a work which owed its birth and its expansion to the lofty thought, efforts, and sacrifices of your Majesty. Your Majesty was a party to those treaties by right of your anterior titles of Founder and Possessor of the International Association; now still does the State belong to you, and on your Majesty devolves the care of regulating its destinies in the triple interest of the native populations, the mother country, and of civilisation. Your Government is mindful, as its acts prove, of what it owes to the Powers who encouraged its début, and it considers it one of its first duties to be a faithful observer of the obligations it has contracted in concert with them and by the same title at the Conferences of Berlin and Brussels.”

If the Berlin Conference gave a kind of constitution to the State founded by King Leopold on the Congo, it was the separate treaties that gave it its form. Of these, the treaties with France and Portugal were the two most important, and their successful negotiations on 5th and 14th February perhaps constituted the most arduous achievement performed at Berlin. The Conference established freedom of trade for a certain distance north and south of the mouth of the Congo, but actual possession was the only arrangement under which it would be possible for the new State to breathe freely and progress in tranquillity. That possession could only be acquired by an arrangement with the Powers named. France with much reluctance drew back from the Lower Congo, below Manyanga, and accepted as a frontier the Chiloango and the crest of the water-parting between the Niadi Quillon

dated 25th February 1885, two days after the last of these treaties, and the declaration of the State's neutrality was issued on the 1st August in the same year.

and the Congo to the meridian of Manyanga. But France did not give way in this matter without exacting a very tangible equivalent. The Association was compelled to cede the whole of the Niadi Kuiliu basin north of the Chiloango and the hinterland of Loango, in which the King had founded fourteen stations and expended a very considerable part of the sum already sunk at that time in the Congo region. Portugal was less exacting, and made the concessions needed for the future existence of the State. It gave up its claims to Banana, Boma, and the whole of the northern bank of the Congo, and accepted a new frontier, leaving it Cabinda, and following a line east, and then north to the Chiloango. Portugal received an equivalent in the region south of the Congo, of which it retained or secured the left bank to as high up as Nokki, and with it also districts on the Koango behind Angola and Loanda. In this manner did the Congo State acquire possession of its river's outlet and the necessary free passage to the ocean.

The precise limits of the Congo State thus defined were as follows:—Its northern boundary in the first section with Portugal, and in the second with France, was as follows:—A straight line from the mouth of the river south of Cabinda, near Ponta Vermelha, to Cabo Lombo; the parallel of Cabo Lombo as far as the point of intersection with the meridian of the Culacalla and the Luculla; the course of the Luculla to the Chiloango; the river Chiloango to its most northern source; and the crest of the water-parting of the Iriadi Kuilu and the Congo to the meridian of Manyanga. The frontier east of Manyanga is denoted by the Congo to Stanley Pool; the meridian line of Stanley Pool; the Congo as far as a point to be fixed above the river Licona Nkundja; a line to be fixed from this point to the 17th degree of longitude east of Greenwich, and following as far as possible the water-parting of the Licona Nkundja basin; the 17th degree of east

longitude (Greenwich) to as far as its junction with the 4th parallel of north latitude; and lastly, the 4th parallel to as far as the 30th degree of east longitude. In November 1885 the crest of the water-parting of the Niadi Kuiliu and the Congo was precisely marked by a Franco-Belgian Commission. The most important modification of the boundary arose with France out of various geographical errors in relation to the river termed Licona.

That river had been inserted in the limits defined by the treaty of 9th February 1889, on the authority of M. de Brazza; but further investigation showed that the French traveller's Licona was really the Likuala, which never reached the 17th degree of longitude. France refused to cede the larger strip of territory between the Likuala and the Ubangi, to which the Congo State was strictly entitled, and contended that by the Licona the Ubangi was plainly meant. This dispute gave rise to long negotiations, which were not settled until May 1887, when, for the sake of general harmony, the King of the Belgians accepted the line of the Ubangi—the Congo State binding itself to exercise no political influence on the right bank of the river north of the 4th parallel, and France accepting the same conditions on the left bank. The necessity for this additional proviso arose from the fact that, whereas the 4th parallel was to have been the northern boundary of the State, the extreme curve of the Ubangi passes north of the 5th parallel.

But if territorially the Congo State suffered, the French Government made one concession of the very first importance. The first agreement with France, of April 1884, gave that Power the right of pre-emption over every other country, if the Congo Association, or its successor, the State, were to alienate its possessions. As Belgium possessed theoretically no superior position in regard to the Congo territory to that of any other country, it followed that France could step in and prevent the

transfer of the great African possessions from the hands of the Belgian Sovereign to those of the Belgian people. In the future such a position would have become intolerable. By the declaration of the French Government attached to the protocol of 29th April 1887, this anomalous privilege and injustice was removed. It stated "that the right of pre-emption accorded to France could not be claimed as against Belgium, of which King Leopold is the sovereign." Then followed the reservation that Belgium would incur towards France the same obligation as was imposed on the Congo Association. The modification of the northern frontier was therefore not wholly disadvantageous to the position and future prospects of the Congo State; while it will be generally allowed that no frontier line could excel the Ubangi in clearness and convenience.

In 1891 some trivial difficulties were arranged with Portugal in the Cabinda district, and with that transaction the northern frontier attained its existing limits. The western boundary is the Atlantic within the limits described. The southern boundary is defined by a line drawn from the southern point of Lake Bangweolo to the 24th degree of east longitude, and following the crest of the water-parting between the Congo and the Zambesi; the crest of the water-parting of the basin of the Kassai, between the 12th and 6th degrees of south latitude; the 6th south parallel to the point of intersection with the Koango; the course of the Koango as far as its reaching the parallel of Nokki; the parallel of Nokki to as far as its contact with the meridian of the mouth of the river Uango Uango; and lastly, the course of the Congo from the Uango Uango to the sea.

The eastern frontier, which is politically as important as the northern, is defined as follows:—The 30th degree of east longitude (Greenwich) as far as 1° 20' of south latitude; a straight line drawn from the intersection of

the 30th degree of east longitude with the parallel of $1^{\circ} 20'$ south latitude, to as far as the northern extremity of Lake Tanganyika; the meridian line of Lake Tanganyika; a straight line drawn from Lake Tanganyika to Lake Moero, along the parallel of $8^{\circ} 30'$ of south latitude; the meridian line of Lake Moero; the water-course uniting Lakes Moero and Bangweolo; and, last, the western shore of Lake Bangweolo. The most important consequence of this limitation on the eastern side was that Karema and the other stations founded east of Tanganyika by the Congo Association, where indeed its enterprise first began, were severed from the present institution. Very soon after the Berlin Conference, Germany began the negotiations with Great Britain which resulted in the assignment of that part of East Africa to her. The Congo State has as its neighbours on the north Portugal and France, and in the north-east Egypt, on the east Great Britain and Germany, on the south Britain and Portugal, and on the west Portugal. The total area of the Congo State is about 2,340,000 square kilometres, or 900,000 square miles, or about one fifth the size of Europe.

The news of the signature of the Act of the Berlin Conference aroused sentiments of deep satisfaction and patriotic feeling throughout Belgium. An end was put to the long feeling of uncertainty as to whether Europe would acquiesce in one of the smaller States acquiring so considerable a part of the African territory, and it was impossible for the most indifferent subject of the King to remain wholly untouched by the universal tribute paid to the noble and lofty motives which had inspired him in his task. The Belgian nation had, however, to take a more definite part in the foundation of the Congo State than the presentation of congratulatory addresses to their Sovereign. By the constitution it was necessary to obtain the ratification of the Belgian Chambers to Belgium's participation in the Act of Berlin. On 10th March M.

Beernaert, the Minister of Finance, and now President of the Chamber of Representatives, brought the matter before the House, and requested the ratification of the Legislature. In concluding his important statement the Belgian Minister delivered the following eloquent peroration :—

“ A new State has thus, by the unanimous accord of the nations, been born for public life ; and for the first time, without doubt, in the history of the world, such an event has been produced, not by conquest or by sanguinary revolution, but as a gage of peace, civilisation, and progress. It is an international work, but yet—we have the right to say it with pride—it is essentially a Belgian work. It is for us a patriotic satisfaction to recognise, with the whole of Europe, that the merit belongs especially to the initiation, to the persistent energy, and to the sacrifices of our King. (Loud applause.) May the Congo, gentlemen, from this day forth, offer to our superabundant activity, to our industries more and more confined, outlets by which we shall know how to profit ! May the enterprising spirit of the King encourage our countrymen to seek, even at a distance, new sources of greatness and prosperity for our dear country ! ”

The subsequent speakers bore testimony to the unanimous satisfaction with which the country greeted the conclusion of the Berlin Conference, and the ratification by Belgium was sanctioned without a dissentient voice. A deputation of the Chamber subsequently waited on the King with an address of congratulation, which read as follows :—

“ SIRE,—The Chamber of Representatives has received with lively satisfaction the communications that your Government has made to it on the subject of the General Act of the Berlin Conference ; such is also the sentiment of the country.

“ To your Majesty belongs the honour of having con-

ceived the African work, of having pursued and developed it by persevering efforts.

“The foundation of the Congo State is destined to mark an epoch in history. It has been saluted as a gage of peace : while opening to industry and to commerce new outlets, it also denotes a great stride towards universal civilisation.

“We felicitate your Majesty on these important results ; and, as Belgians, we are proud of the solemn homage rendered by the Powers to the large, generous, and progressive ideas of our Sovereign.”

The reader will like to possess the King’s reply to the address of his Parliament :—

“GENTLEMEN,—I am happy, together with the Chamber and the country, at the work which the wisdom of the Powers has just accomplished at Berlin.

“Assembled at the invitation of Germany and of France, and presided over by an illustrious statesman, the Berlin Conference has produced a diplomatic act of high significance : at the same time that precious guarantees have been granted to the native populations of Central Africa, the free navigation of two great rivers has been secured, vast countries are opened to the commerce of all nations ; and it will rest with themselves to enjoy the benefits of neutrality.

“The new Congo State will offer to the industrial activity of Belgium outlets of which I will not doubt that she will know how to make use.

“I have always been convinced of the importance that there is for our country to extend its relations in remote quarters, and to aid that was one of the objects which, quite apart from any exclusive idea, I aimed at in founding the African Association.

“I am profoundly touched by the sentiments that the Chamber of Representatives expresses towards me. They will encourage me to pursue the work I have undertaken.

“I do not conceal from myself the difficulties which remain to be surmounted ; but far greater assuredly were the difficulties of the start, and yet they have been conquered. They have been conquered, thanks to devotion without limit, to heroical devotion, to which, before you gentlemen who represent the country, I wish to render a solemn homage.

“I have confidence in success, and I wish that Belgium, without its costing her anything, should find in these vast territories, freed from all tax of admission, new elements of development and prosperity.

“Pray accept, gentlemen, my lively thanks for having conveyed to me the expression of the Chamber’s sentiments.

“I am extremely grateful to it for the address which it has voted to me, and I am happy to find myself once more in community of view with it.”

The Belgian Senate sanctioned the ratification with the same unanimity as the Lower Chamber, and on the 23rd April 1885 the ratification of the Berlin Act was finally recorded as an Act of State.

There still remained one more transaction to complete the founding of the Congo State. Its flag had been generally recognised ; its existence as a State, neutral and independent, had been guaranteed by the Great Powers, and it was left free to do the work that it had undertaken. But for the moment it was a State without a head. The Berlin Conference had given it much, but it had not endowed it with a sovereign. The universal tribute rendered to the King of the Belgians indicated clearly enough who, in its opinion, should be the head, but it had not explained how the desired result was to be attained. There were several practical difficulties in the path of executing what seemed the most obvious and natural solution. Belgian opinion was by no means ready in 1885 to take over the charge of the Congo as a

national State undertaking. As the King said, there were difficulties "still to be surmounted," and he wished to hand it over to Belgium "without its costing her anything." Moreover, it was highly doubtful how far the King or the Congo State could transfer its authority to Belgium without breaking faith with France; and that obstacle was not removed for some years later. Another course had therefore to be taken; and it was proposed that the King of the Belgians should be granted the power of becoming Sovereign of the Congo State without in any way involving his country, and by making the connection between Belgium and the Congo a purely personal one. This proposal was unfolded in the following letter from the King to his Council of Ministers:—

"BRUSSELS, 16th April 1885.

"GENTLEMEN,—The work created in Africa by the International African Association has greatly developed. A new State has been founded, its limits are fixed, and its flag is recognised by almost all the Powers.

"There remains to organise a Government and an administration on the banks of the Congo.

"The plenipotentiaries of the nations represented at the Berlin Conference have shown themselves favourable to the work undertaken, and since then the two Legislative Chambers, the principal towns of the country, and a great number of important bodies and associations, have expressed to me on this subject the most sympathetic sentiments.

"With such encouragement I could not recoil from the prosecution and achievement of a task in which I had, as a matter of fact, taken an important part; and since, gentlemen, you consider, as I do, that it may be useful to the country, I beg of you to demand from the Legislative Chambers the assent which is necessary to me.

"The terms of article 62 of the Constitution describe by themselves the situation which has to be established.

“King of the Belgians, I should at the same time be the sovereign of another State.

“That State would be independent, like Belgium, and it would enjoy, like her, the benefits of neutrality.

“It would have to provide for its own needs; and experience, based on the example of the neighbouring colonies, justifies me in affirming that it would dispose of the necessary resources.

“For its defence and its police it would rely on African forces commanded by European volunteers.

“There would then be between Belgium and the new State only a personal bond. I am convinced that this union would be advantageous for the country, without there being the possibility of imposing any burdens on it in any case.

“If my hopes are realised, I shall find myself sufficiently rewarded for my efforts. The welfare of Belgium, as you know, gentlemen, is the object of my whole life.

LEOPOLD.”

When the proposition had to be defended in the Chamber of Representatives, M. Beernaert had not much difficulty in showing that there was nothing so exceptional in this personal arrangement as some of its critics seemed to suppose. It was the same as had existed between Prussia and Neuchatel, between Holland and Luxembourg, and between Great Britain and Hanover from 1714 to 1837. With only one dissentient, the Chamber passed the following resolution :—“Decided : His Majesty Leopold II., King of the Belgians, is authorised to be the chief of the State founded in Africa by the International Association of the Congo. The union between Belgium and the new State of the Congo shall be exclusively personal.” The Senate passed a similar decision, and on the 1st May 1885 the King wrote the following letter of acknowledgment to his Ministers.

“GENTLEMEN,—The Chambers, by voting almost

unanimously the resolution that you submitted to them, have shown themselves convinced that at the same time that I was pursuing, in the general interest, the international African work, I had it at heart to serve the country, to contribute to the augmentation of its wealth, and to increase its reputation in the world. I have asked you to thank, in my name, the Chambers for the mark of high confidence which they have given me. I also beg of you to accept for yourselves the expression of my very sincere gratitude. Believe me, gentlemen, your very affectionate

LEOPOLD."

Among innumerable tributes from foreign bodies and societies, the visit of the Lord Mayor of London in state, to offer the King of the Belgians the congratulations of the metropolis of the British Empire, deserves special mention; and if the policy of the British Government threatened at the time of the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty to injure the King's work on the Congo, it was only a passing phase; while in no other country did it receive greater or more cordial sympathy than in ours. The names of Sir Bartle Frere and Sir William Mackinnon are associated with the conception and founding of the Congo State; and I was the humble instrument chosen to narrate at the time General Gordon's intended plans on the Congo, which were, unfortunately, superseded by the Khartoum Mission. It is not out of place to record the fact that no man had a greater desire to promote the King's work, or a stronger belief in the good that the Congo State might accomplish, than this great practical administrator, who would have found in Central Africa the same scope for his energy and ability as the Soudan had provided during the five years of his successful rule.

The Berlin Conference gave a tangible and definite form to the idea formulated at Brussels eight years before. The Association of philanthropists, explorers, and men of commerce who originated the scheme under the direction

of the King of the Belgians, became a recognised State, neutral and independent, with the same enlightened philanthropist at its head in the capacity of sovereign. The subsequent conventions with Portugal and France secured for it, if not the full extent of the rights it might have justly claimed, at least freedom of movement and sufficient elbow room. It is true that clouds remained on the horizon, and that experience showed that the magnanimous and unselfish views which triumphed at Berlin did, and perhaps could, not animate the Foreign Offices of interested Powers, when the admirable precepts of the Conference had to be translated into facts. But this was no more than should have been expected, especially when it is remembered that every year witnessed a remarkable progress in the views of European Governments and nations as to the important influence of African territorial and commercial possessions in shaping the destinies of the world. If the State had in the first years of its existence to make concessions, and to enjoy the privilege of being the only party to the Conference to carry out the principles of self-abnegation to which all had subscribed, the modification of the promise given to France under a sense of imminent danger was, when the future destinies of the State are considered, no inadequate compensation. At least that modification secured the permanent possession of the Congo State for the Belgian people. The chief element of uncertainty in its destinies was thus removed, for it paved the way to that legacy of the Congo State to his country by King Leopold which will be described hereafter, and which no one can now doubt that Belgium will accept with gratitude as a priceless gift.

CHAPTER IV

THE CONGO AND ITS AFFLUENTS

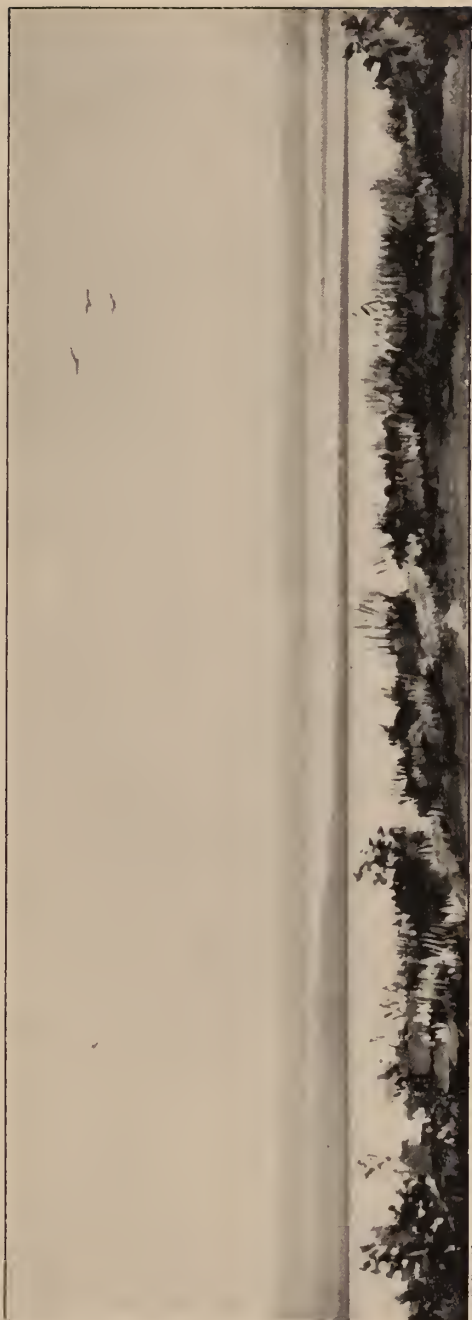
THE diplomatic triumph at Berlin was only the first, and perhaps the easier, half of the task of founding the State of the Congo. It signified Europe's sanction to a certain thing being done, but it by no means followed as a matter of course that the thing could be done, or that the necessary resources were available for its accomplishment. As a matter of fact, the available resources were inconsiderable in proportion to the magnitude of the task: they consisted of nothing more than the King's private fortune, seriously diminished by nine years of effort, and that monarch's indomitable spirit, which was not likely to quail after having overcome so many obstacles. The task itself had also been rendered more difficult by the terms in which the mandate of Europe was expressed. Europe did not say to the King or his representatives, "You have done so well in Central Africa, you have established so clear a title to its possession, that we assign you the Congo region as your fair share in the partition of Africa, and leave you to govern it as you deem fit." The Powers, I say, did nothing of the kind. They acquiesced in what had been done, and they sanctioned the creation of the State, but they laid down the strictest regulations for its conduct, and they defined the work it was to accomplish. It was to introduce civilisation into the vast region it had to administer, not as a mere phrase, but as a substantial reality represented by Free Trade, the Postal Union, and

the extirpation of the Slave Trade at its very source. At the moment, the administration of the Congo controlled no revenue, and the rigorous fiscal conditions rendered its acquisition impossible within any reasonable period. Long before it could be obtained, the State might have collapsed under the weight of its burden and the onerous character of the conditions imposed upon it by countries the majority of whom themselves existed only through a protective tariff and an inflated revenue. How, then, was it reasonable or possible to expect that the Congo State would succeed in making good its right to have a separate existence, or in executing the mission with which the mutual fears, and not the excessive affection, of Europe had entrusted it? What was the machinery which enabled the conductors of this critical enterprise to triumph over the deficiency of means, the arduous character of the work, and the conditions that exacted the most scrupulous attention and the most sustained effort on their part? The answer to this question can undoubtedly be made in a single sentence. The triumph must, in the first place, be attributed to the magnificent system of inland navigation supplied by the Congo and its affluents.

Space will not be wasted therefore, if, on the threshold of our task in describing the work accomplished by the State after its creation, we pause to describe geographically the great river and the wide-stretching water system, to which the success achieved must be mainly assigned. The reader can form the conclusion for himself, that if there had been no such natural means of communication, not merely by the Congo but also by its affluents northwards and southwards, it would have been impossible for the State to establish the numerous stations marked on the map in this volume, and to make within ten years of its creation its authority respected and effective within the wide boundaries, secured by its own efforts and sanctioned at Berlin.

TWO VIEWS ON THE CONGO.

J. MALOUX SC.



J. MALOUX SC.





The river Congo was discovered by the Portuguese in the year 1484, when Diego Cam, one of the navigators who prepared the way for Vasco da Gama, anchored in the mouth of the river, and the curious in such matters will find in the Museum of Nuremburg the globe prepared by the German cosmographer, Martin Behaim, who was on board one of Cam's caracals. The natives told the Portuguese commander that the name of the stream was N'Zadi—"the river"—from which was coined the word Zaïre, the old name of the Congo. The Portuguese also discovered that there was a kingdom on the banks of the river, called Ekongo or Congo, and they succeeded in concluding such cordial relations with it as to convert its king to Christianity. In 1491 a second Portuguese expedition founded the posts of San Antonio and San Salvador. San Salvador still exists, but in ruins, a few miles south of Matadi, within the Portuguese frontier, and from the first Christian king of Ekongo descended the line of the kings of Angola, whose flag was the blue banner with the golden star, which has been adopted by the Congo Independent State. The old town of Ekongo or Congo assumed the modern name of San Salvador, but in revenge the river Zaïre acquired that of the Congo, and thus preserved the name of the State with which Diego Cam first established relations.

The peculiarity of the Congo is that it is a navigable river in the interior of the Dark Continent, cut off from the ocean by eighty-six miles of cataracts. The interior of Africa is a plateau, of which the western rampart is formed by the Crystal Mountains, that guard the continent against the full sweep of the Atlantic. The mighty volume of the Congo forced for itself a passage over and through that rampart, and in the short distance between Stanley Pool and Matadi it descends not less than eighteen hundred feet by a succession of ledges. Below Matadi the river rolls to the ocean with a volume which some-

one, with more artifice than lucidity, has safely computed at fifty thousand cubic metres of water a second. The effect of this mighty volume is even felt by the Atlantic. For thirty miles from the mouth of the Congo the sea assumes a brown tinge from the colour of its waters; for a still greater distance the ocean steamer finds its speed diminished by the counter current of its outflow. It is not merely the length of the river in its unbroken course of three thousand miles that constitutes its importance, but its almost numberless affluents, great and small, that make up a river basin unexampled throughout the world for its extent, covering nearly fifteen hundred miles in breadth, and a surface of three million square miles. The practical fact that already the Congo and its tributaries offer eight thousand miles open to navigation, is perhaps the one that will most impress the reader as to its utility.

For the sake of clearness, the Congo basin has been divided into three sections, or rather three terraces—the lower basin near the coast, the central basin on the Upper Congo, and the higher basin or region of the Lakes. The river finds its origin in the Chingambo Mountains, where it bears the name of the Chambezi; it then passes through Lake Bangweolo, and issues from it under the name of the Luapula. It next crosses Lake Moero, takes the name of Lualaba after receiving at Ankorro the waters of the stream possessing that distinctive name, and at Nyangwe becomes the Congo properly so called.

Each of the parent streams of the Luapula and the Lualaba accomplishes on its downward course the same feat as the main river achieves east of Matadi, that is to say, they have at an earlier epoch cut a way for themselves through the Mitumba range, which forms the southern rampart of the Central African plateau.

As was the case with the Nile, the question of the true upper course of the Congo has given rise to much contro-

versy and difference of opinion, and has only been settled within the last three years by the explorations of the Belgian officers, Delcommune, Bia, and Brasseur. It has been settled, too, in a sense contrary to what was generally assumed, for before the year 1895 the opinion was practically unanimous in favour of the Lualaba, the western course, whereas geographers have now come round to the view that the eastern branch, known as the Luapula, is the upper course of the Congo.

The Luapula, a name signifying the Great River, rises in British territory, and its source may be found in the Chingambo Mountains, between Lakes Tanganyika and Nyassa. It is known as the Chambezi before it reaches the Bangweolo, and joins the Congo above Nyangwe at Ankorro. Ankorro is situated, as nearly as possible, on $26^{\circ} 55'$ east longitude and $6^{\circ} 25'$ south latitude. The Luapula receives in its course many tributaries, but none of these are of much importance, and, although in length the Luapula is superior to the Lualaba, the latter enjoys the superiority in respect of size and the number of important tributaries. The Luapula has been only partially explored, and, when further light has been thrown on that portion of its course between Ankorro and Lake Moero, some correction may be made in the accepted facts, and with them some change of view may follow. But enough is already known to establish the truth that the stream is navigable for three hundred and forty miles above Kassongo.

The Lualaba, on the other hand, has been practically explored throughout its whole length. Its source was discovered by Lieutenants Francqui and Derscheid at $11^{\circ} 44'$ south latitude, in close proximity to the source of the Zambesi. The first cataracts of any importance are encountered at the Nzilo gorge, and cover a section of the river for over forty miles. The bed of the river then narrows in to a quarter of a mile in breadth, and just

below Nzilo it receives its first important tributary in the Lufupa. Among its other tributaries the most important is the Lubudi, a stream which by its size and volume struck Delcommune so much that for a time he thought it, and not the Lualaba, was the main channel. It finds its source in the same range as the Lualaba and the Zambesi. If the Lubudi is the most important of its tributaries on the left bank, the Lufila is still more important on the right. It also finds its origin near the other streams, waters the promising region of Katanga, and reaches the Lualaba at Lake Kassali. The decision between these two rivers is far more difficult than between the Blue and White Niles, and approximates more nearly to the question relating to the Missouri and the Upper Mississippi. Difference of opinion is even allowable, and what is accepted now may be modified a few years later.

The subject of the affluents of the Congo is scarcely less important than that of the main stream itself. On the Congo the eight hundred miles of uninterrupted navigation from Stanley Pool to Nyangwe provide a magnificent and costless high route between the west and the east. But, to supplement and complete its utility, cross communications from north to south are necessary, and these exist in the numerous tributaries of the main stream. It will be convenient to describe these in their order on either bank, passing in review first those on the right or northern side of the Congo, and then those on the left or southern bank of the river.

Ignoring minor and non-navigable tributaries such as the Lukuga, which flows out of Tanganyika, the first tributary on the right bank below Nyangwe is the Aruwimi. This river is of much importance, because it prolongs the navigable route of the Congo in a direct easterly direction for another hundred miles to Yambuya, on $25^{\circ} 10'$ of east longitude. The Aruwimi rises in the Blue

Mountains near Lake Albert Nyanza, and is at first known by the name of the Ituri. It receives many tributaries, and, when it reaches the Congo, is a magnificent stream of a mile in breadth. Unfortunately, its course above Yambuya is so broken by cataracts that it is useless for purposes of navigation, but it waters a fertile and thickly-peopled region, and the forest of Ituri is one of the finest of the virgin forests that once covered the whole of Central Africa. When the Aruwimi was first discovered, it was thought that it might be the Uelle.

The Itimbiri and the Mongalla are the next two tributaries of any importance. The former is useless for navigation, on account of numerous cataracts; but the latter, although a stream of far less length or volume than the Aruwimi, is, practically speaking, navigable throughout its course. It waters a densely-peopled region, and enables the State to hold much of the territory between the Ubangi and the Congo by the line of stations along its banks, of which Congo may be termed the chief.

We now come to the Ubangi, the most important of all the affluents of the Congo, and a river which with its own tributaries, the Uelle and the Mbomu, must play a most important part in the development of Central Africa. The manner in which the Ubangi was fortunately saved from the grip of France has already been described. Its course, as far as its bifurcation into the Uelle and the Mbomu, was first explored by Van Gele, and communications are now maintained along its course, in the first portion by steamboat, and above the cataracts by canoes. The natives are extremely skilful in the management of these boats, in which they succeed in traversing the majority of the cataracts. The Uelle may be considered the true upper course of the Ubangi. It rises, like the Aruwimi, in the Blue Mountains west of the Upper Nile. Dr. Junker, the Russian traveller, who first discovered it, imagined that the Uelle flowed into Lake Tchad, but, even

before Van Gele settled the point by absolute demonstration, geographers had come to the conclusion that the Uelle was the upper course of the Ubangi.

The importance of the Mbomu, which is an important water-way that has not been explored throughout its course, is political in that it forms for a considerable extent the boundary between the Congo State and the French possessions. It waters a wooded and beautiful country. Its numerous tributaries make the region between it and the Uelle one of the most promising districts in the Independent State. The inhabitants of the upper course of these two streams are the Niam Niam or Azandé warriors, among whom, if the experiences of General Gordon and Sir Samuel Baker are remembered, it will not seem rash to prophesy that the State will obtain some of its best soldiers. Politically, the Mbomu is more important than the Uelle, because the operations of the French in the Semio region (which, as will be explained in another chapter, the Congo State ceded to France) may be the cause of complications hereafter. The several tributaries which the Congo receives below the Ubangi are of little or no importance.

There is one point in connection with the Ubangi which deserves notice, before we pass on to the rivers of the left bank. North of Banzyville this river makes a great curve northwards until, on reaching almost the same latitude on the western side of the arc, the Lua, a tributary of the Ubangi on its left bank, is found. This stream was proved to be navigable by Captain Heymans, in the *En Avant*, as far as Bowara; and as the Dekere, explored from the side of Banzyville, is almost certain to prove the upper course of the Lua, there seems a reasonable prospect of this turning out to be the most convenient route to the Uelle, on account of the difficulties in the path of navigation on the Ubangi, in the cataracts of Zongo and Mokoangai. Even if it should fail

to be adopted as the chief route, it would still be useful as an alternative one.

We now come to the affluents of the left bank. Below Ankorro, the point of junction between the two uppermost courses of the river, there is no tributary of any importance until we come to the Lomami, which is the second in importance of all the streams on the left bank. The Lomami is entitled in every way to be called a splendid river of Central Africa, for it provides not less than six hundred and forty miles of open navigation. It rises in the same region as the Luapula, and long follows a parallel course ; in fact, the two streams are at several points less than fifty miles apart. For the greater part of its course the Lomami is a river of three or four hundred yards in breadth, but in parts it narrows in to sixty yards, and its depth varies from eleven to twenty feet. It has many important tributaries, and furnishes the State with another of those admirable waterways which are the basis of its strength and security.

The Lulonga, which is the next affluent, has a peculiar course, almost parallel with the Congo. It and its chief tributary, the Lopuri, are navigable throughout the greater part of their course. The next stream in the downward course is the Ruki, which is also navigable. It possesses two upper courses and several tributaries, which facilitate communications and contribute to the fertility of an extensive region.

The Kassai is the principal of the southern affluents of the Congo, and, both in the number of its tributaries, the extent of its water system, and the length of navigation that it provides, ranks next to the Congo itself as a means of internal navigation. After much uncertainty and some contradictions, the exact course of this river has been agreed upon, and the Sankuru, instead of being treated as its main course, has been assigned the position of its chief affluent ; while the Lubefu, originally named the Lomami,

furnishes another important water-way, stretching almost to the valley of the Lomami itself. While it rises as far south as the twelfth parallel of south latitude, it is navigable from Wissmann Falls at the sixth parallel to its junction with the Congo, some distance above Stanley Pool. Its tributary, the Sankuru, is a scarcely less copious stream, and on that account was long thought to be the main course of the river. It has its origin in the Sambas plateau, where rise many of the streams that feed the Lualaba or Congo. The Lubefu is the principal affluent of the Sankuru, and provides the means of communication with the Upper Lomami and the Upper Congo. In fact, the strips of land intervening between the highest navigable points on the three rivers, Lubefu, Lomami, and Lualaba, are so narrow that a suggestion to connect them by means of a railway has long been made, and it has now been decided that this railway shall be the next taken in hand.

In parts the Kassai and the Sankuru are two or three miles across, and their average breadth for a distance of hundreds of miles is not less than eighteen hundred yards. Lower down than its junction with the Sankuru the Kassai receives on its left side the important tributary of the Kwango. This river has a direct course from south to north; but, although it rises almost in the same parallel as the Kassai, it is only navigable for less than half its course, or below Kingunchi Falls. The main course of the Kassai below the Kwango is called the Kua, and forms a stream of magnificent breadth and volume. Some distance short of the junction with the Congo, the Mfini, which joins the river and Lake Leopold, deserves mention for that reason. With the water system of the Kassai this enumeration of the affluents of the Congo may be brought to a conclusion.

The general result from this survey of the Congo and its affluents is, that there is seen to exist in the heart of

Central Africa a water system that not merely fertilises a torrid region and tempers the heat of the equatorial sun, but provides a water-way, north, south, east, and west, for the emissaries of civilisation and the agents of the State.



A RIVER VIEW.

Great as are the facilities and numerous the advantages they present under the condition in which nature left them, these are undoubtedly such as can be immensely improved by the hand of science. A little engineering

will go far towards removing obstacles that detract from the value of the great rivers that have been named. The process by which they cleft a way for themselves through mountain barriers has been described, but frequently the way cut was left obstructed ; and thus we find the courses of many of these rivers closed by rocks and cataracts, and their utility diminished. No doubt a large part of these difficulties can be removed by means of dynamite, while the connection of the upper courses of the navigable rivers, which follow more or less parallel courses, holds forth a prospect of railway development that must add immensely to the commerce of the region at the head waters of the Kassai, the Lomami, and the Congo, which abut on British South Africa.

But we must not exclude from our consideration of the water system of Central Africa the numerous lakes, which are also useful for the purpose of navigation. Taking them in their order from the western side, we come first to Lake Leopold II., discovered and named by Mr. Stanley in 1882. It is a great sheet of water, but of no great depth. As described, it is connected with the Congo by the Mfini and the Kassai, and it is highly probable that it has a channel on its north-eastern side to Lake Tumba or Matumba. That lake is itself connected with the Congo by the Irebu, a stream navigable for steamers. The upper course of the Lualaba passes through a series of lakes or lagoons, which will probably disappear at no very remote future. The eastern boundaries of the State are marked by a number of lakes, some of which are entirely outside its territory, like Lake Albert, the western shores of which are British, while others belong wholly or in part to the Congo territory. Of these, Lake Albert Edward belongs almost entirely to the State, and it is connected with Lake Albert by an important stream, the Semliki—half in British and half in State territory. South of Albert Edward is Lake Kivu,

entirely within the Congo sphere. It has been only partially explored, but the State has already established two stations on its eastern shores, named Lubuga and Luahilimta. The German traveller, Count von Götzen, speaks of the beautiful situation of this lake, with snow-white rocky islets, frequented by herons, cranes, and peacocks, and surrounded by an extremely fertile country. Out of the southern side of Kivu flows the river Rusisi, which establishes a connecting link with Tanganyika, but, as it falls over two thousand feet in less than seventy miles, and is obstructed by numerous cataracts, it is useless for navigation.

Lake Tanganyika, the great lake of this region of Africa, is divided equally between the Congo State and Germany, while on its southern shores British authority is established. This lake was discovered by the late Sir Richard Burton in 1857, and nearly twenty years later it was circumnavigated by Mr. Stanley. It is about four hundred miles in length and forty-five in breadth, so that its surface is nearly as large as Belgium. Its picturesque surroundings and beautiful aspect have been testified to by everyone who has visited it. The navigation of this inland sea is carried on by a regular flotilla, and its western coast is lined by a series of stations, of which Albertville, Mpala, and Baudouinville are the most important. Lake Moero, south-west of Tanganyika, is the last of the lakes to which reference must be made. There are, of course, numerous other lakes of minor size and importance, and, as has been observed, the courses of the rivers are marked by a succession of miniature lakes. This is particularly the case with the Lualaba and the main course of the Congo. The latter widens out at one point to a breadth of twenty miles, while Stanley Pool is of sufficient dimensions to deserve the name of a lake.

So accurate an explorer as M. Alexandre Delcommune has expressed the conviction that the majority of these

lakelets or lagoons will disappear in the course of time, owing to the constant evaporation of the waters and the exceptional dryness of certain seasons, joined to the continual encroachment of the grass and papyrus. In proof of this, he mentioned that he had noticed, and established, a diminution in the volume of water on the Lualaba in a period of two years. In his opinion, the fresh supply of water brought into the Congo by its affluents is not equal in amount to what it loses by evaporation, and the effect of this will no doubt first be seen in the gradual disappearance of the minor lakes and lagoons. We must



A STEAMER ON THE CONGO.

conclude from this, not that the rivers will become less navigable, but rather that their courses will grow more clearly defined, and that navigation will be simplified by the contraction of the channels and the disappearance of the marshes, which are both useless and dangerous.

Having described the water-ways of Central Africa, it will not be out of place to conclude this chapter with a list of the steamboats at present engaged in the tasks of maintaining the State authority, provisioning and reinforcing the stations, and promoting trade on and by means of those rivers. The small flotilla launched by Mr. Stanley on the Pool in 1881 was the beginning of the

fleet, which now numbers fifty vessels, and which must steadily increase as time goes on. It will increase the more rapidly when the slips at Ndolo, the port of Leopoldville, are completed and ready to launch vessels on Stanley Pool, but the completion of the railway from Matadi to Leopoldville has simplified the task of launching vessels made in Europe on the Upper Congo. A considerable part of the last Congo loan has been assigned for the purchase of new river steamers and the general improvement of navigation.

The following vessels belong to the State :—The *City*



NDOLO, ON STANLEY POOL.

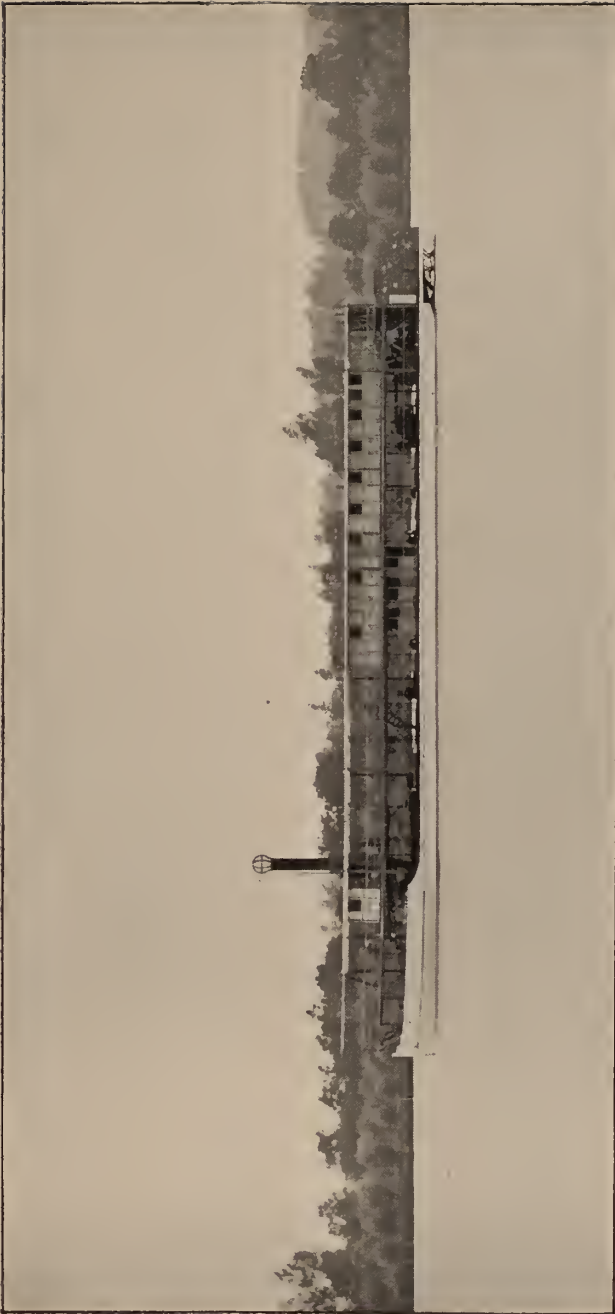
of Brussels, City of Antwerp, City of Bruges, City of Ghent, City of Ostend, City of Charleroi, City of Liège, Archduchess Stephanie, Princess Clementine, Stanley, Deliverance, Florida, Baron Dhanis, King of the Belgians, En Avant, Colonel Wahis, A.I.A., Baron Lambermont, and Captain Shagerstrom, or nineteen steamers in all. The French Congo Company has four vessels, the Ubangi, Daumas, Duc d'Uzes, and Faidherbe. Three Belgian commercial companies, the more important being the Belgian Society of the Upper Congo, have the following nine vessels—Colonel North, Katanga, France,

General Sanford, Ville de Paris, Gironde, Oise, A. Beernaert, and Rhone. A Dutch company has four vessels, and several missionary societies have six more.

Besides those on the Congo, the African Lakes Corporation has placed a steam-yacht on Tanganyika, and another on Moero. But the State, in addition to the steamers, has launched on the Upper Congo over forty steel lighters, or whalers, which are utilised for the purpose of doing the work hitherto performed by canoes. As these are constructed in steel, they can bear the buffeting in the cataracts far better than the native boats. As soon as the railway to Leopoldville is in good working order, steps will be taken to convey there new large stern-wheel boats of from 150 to 250 tons, which will represent the Congo river steamers of the future to Stanley Pool, where a harbour is in course of preparation to accommodate fifty such vessels. Hitherto it has been impossible to convey vessels of that size by the portage system, the only conveyance available; and this will become clearer when it is stated that two thousand men, on an average, were required to carry one of the smaller vessels now in use.

There is a regular postal service, in connection with the Postal Union, with the Upper Congo by means of a steamer leaving Leopoldville every eleven days. It takes fifty-five days to get to Stanley Falls and back. Other steamers are engaged in patrolling the several rivers—one for the Kassai, and another for Lake Leopold. The *Colonel Wahis* patrols the Kwango, and the *Baron Dhanis* the Lualaba. The *En Avant*, which took such an active part as described in the earlier operations, is stationed on the Ubangi; while the steel lighters are engaged on the Upper Lomami, Lualaba, and Ubangi, in surmounting the difficulties where navigation is obstructed by the cataracts.

While the large stern-wheel vessel is no doubt the Congo boat of the future, the existing flotilla may be



A STERN-WHEEL STEAMER.

divided into two classes. The smaller boat is one of 15 tons, driven by a single or double screw. This boat is chiefly employed on police work, or in connection with the despatch of minor expeditions. The larger vessel is of 50 tons burden, and is a paddle-wheel steamer. This is employed in trade operations, and in the conveyance of supplies to the different stations. The engines are worked by wood fires, and, although the use of this fuel leaves more space for cargo, its collection imposes a considerable daily labour on the crew, and entails no slight loss of time. Owing to the rapidity of the current, which in some of the streams and at the flood seasons attains a speed of nine miles an hour, the engines have to be capable of developing a greater speed than that. No doubt the motor power of the future on the Congo will be electricity; but, notwithstanding the dangers to navigation on account of the current, the difficulty in distinguishing the true course of the river in consequence of innumerable islets, and the fact that there is nothing in the shape of a signpost to indicate the track along a river, generally a mile in breadth, and sometimes twenty miles, not a single accident has occurred of such a nature as to entail the loss of a ship.

The possession of the water-ways provided by the Congo and its affluents explains the success that has attended what would otherwise have been a stupendous and, perhaps for King Leopold, an impossible task. Even without these auxiliaries of nature, Central Africa would surely have been gathered into the fold of civilisation, but the work that has been done in twelve years would have been spread over generations, and perhaps centuries. Had such a period been necessary, neither the ruler nor the people of Belgium could have hoped to benefit by the result; and the gloomy fears of some of the Belgian critics, that their Sovereign was incurring a responsibility and burden beyond the national strength, would have been

realised. A little State may, by wisdom and promptitude, secure a success which international opinion may grudgingly allow it to retain, but the prize must be secured before others have had the chance of coveting it. In these days of keen international competition, the strong will seize the least excuse to declare that the weak are unable to accomplish such a task as has been done on the Congo, and to thrust them aside as unworthy. In the case before us, we should have been told that the task which needed a giant's strength had been undertaken by a pigmy, and that Belgium was consequently unworthy because unable to accomplish it. We should have been told this—if the thing had not been done. But, thanks to the broad and wide-stretching waters of the Congo and the other rivers enumerated, the task was accomplished with the means that would have been pronounced inadequate by the impartial observer, and, before Europe has had time to generate the sentiments of jealousy and covetousness, the control of Central Africa has been established, the authority of the Government has been made effective throughout the whole region assigned to it on the map, and the little State has been left the enjoyment of the prize it secured in the manner already described. The Congo River explains the secret of the great triumph achieved. It is to the same ally, and to the improvement of the means of utilising it, that the Congo State has to look for increased prosperity, progress, and security.

CHAPTER V

THE SLAVE TRADE AND ITS HORRORS

BEFORE pursuing the details of the subject under our notice any further, we may profitably take a glance at the slave trade and the pursuit of slaves, which were the immediate cause of the King's intervention in Central Africa. The mere statement that an individual statesman or Government is advancing the cause of civilisation is of a vague character, that may well fail to carry conviction, and certainly leaves room for scepticism. Ambitious designs are generally wrapped up in some phrase, to the effect that they are undertaken on behalf of civilisation, but the world rates them at less than their author's value. The exact manner in which the Congo State came into existence, and the primary causes of its success, have been described ; and, before passing on, time and space will not be wasted in bringing before the reader the horrors of the slave trade as it was conducted twenty years ago, when the King first took up the task of removing this plague spot, and of clearing the escutcheon of civilisation from the charge of indifference. In this case, at least, it will have to be admitted that there was no exaggeration of the malady for the purpose of concealing an ambitious purpose, and that the outrage to humanity was of so deep a dye as to make it everyone's duty to sympathise with and support the task which the King of the Belgians was the foremost to undertake.

The early missionaries, with Livingstone at their head,

had done much in informing the world as to the extent of the slave trade, and the cruelties inflicted on millions of the inhabitants of Africa by its maintenance. The early travellers—Burton and Baker pre-eminent among them—had brought back such tales of human suffering and atrocity as appealed to the most indifferent. Sir Samuel Baker, in describing a village in 1864, said that it “was then a perfect garden, thickly populated, and producing all that man could desire.” Of the same village he wrote, eight years later: “The scene is changed, all is wilderness. The population has fled! Not a village is to be seen. They kidnap the women and children for slaves, and plunder and destroy wherever they set their foot.” These and other similar statements as to the ravages committed by the slave hunters stirred up opinion in Europe; and in England, in particular, the demonstration of the fact that the slave trade—at which the Emancipation Act was thought to have dealt a deadly blow—flourished unchecked in Africa, roused a strong feeling of resentment and horror. That sentiment bore fruit in at least one practical measure. The Khedive of Egypt was induced or constrained to join the Powers that had vetoed slavery, to sign a convention on the subject, and to appoint General Gordon to put down the slave trade in the Soudan. It will suffice to say that, after six years’ ceaseless effort, General Gordon put an end to slave hunting within the whole of the Egyptian Soudan measured in its largest extent.

But the evidence of many travellers went to show that the slave trade in the Upper Nile valley was only one branch of an evil that had its ramifications throughout interior Africa. The iniquitous system flourished on Tanganyika and the Upper Congo as well as on the Nile, and the cruelties inflicted in these regions surpassed anything reported from the Khedive’s upper provinces. In considering this subject, it is always necessary to make a

clear difference between domestic slavery and the pursuit and capture of slaves by open violence and operations of war. The former is a system bad in itself, incompatible with civilisation, and that calls for suppression wherever possible, but, after all, it need not be accompanied by revolting conditions or excessive cruelty. There are circumstances, indeed, under which it might even be called natural and advantageous ; but the whole system calls for unqualified condemnation, because the existence of the slave trade is the excuse and justification for the iniquitous proceedings of the slave dealer and slave hunter. In dealing with this branch of the slave trade, tolerance, and even deliberateness, became impossible. As Baron Lambertmont has said very finely, "The chase of man is a crime of lèse-humanity. It should be put down everywhere, where it is possible to reach it, both by land and by sea." Before the year 1879 Gordon had put it down between Khartoum and the Great Lakes, and thus established the fact that the Arab slave hunters, who were the scourge of the negro races, might be coerced.

The first article of the Belgian Committee's statutes contained the special mention of its having as one of its main objects "the suppression of the slave trade." As soon as the task was seriously taken in hand, abundant evidence was forthcoming of the inhumanities attending the capture of slaves, and to show that no exaggeration had been made by those who declared that the cruelties inflicted on the unhappy victims far surpassed those on the ocean voyage across the Atlantic in old days. The best evidence on the subject was provided by the Belgian missionaries. The following is the summary of a letter from one of them to the eminent Cardinal Lavigerie, whose name will always be associated with the anti-slavery campaign :—

"Towards mid-day we saw on the hills around our station crowds of negroes running towards us. They told

us that a slave-hunting chief was about to attack them. At first we thought it was only a false alarm, but soon we saw the dreaded Ronga Ronga with their red flag flying. Those of the natives who could not escape into our station were taken prisoners. After a long discussion, they agreed to allow us to ransom such of their captives as we could pay for, but, as they had plundered our villages and property, we had little or nothing wherewith to pay them. The bulk of the captives were thus carried off into slavery—a melancholy caravan in the midst of these brigands. One old man caught hold of a priest's arm as he passed, and begged him to save him, but, as nothing was left, he was dragged off by the cord attached to his neck. A poor woman cried out, and resisted the placing of the cord round her neck. One of these human monsters shot her in the breast with a pistol, and she died in dreadful agony. O God, who will deliver us from such horrors?"

Here is another account, showing the manner in which the slave hunters got rid of those of their captives who were unable to keep up with their line of march. "Three thousand natives had been captured by this expedition, but only two thousand reached their destination. The rest had been murdered by their captors, who would not leave any laggards behind them, for fear lest they should secure their liberty. At each halting-place, ten, twenty, and sometimes fifty, of the sick were massacred. At one stage on the march three hundred women and children who could not proceed any farther were thrown into the river." Captain Storms added his testimony to the same effect. He wrote: "The most odious thing about it is the manner in which the slaves are conveyed from place to place. Chained one to another in groups of ten or a dozen, they are driven to the coast, and, as smallpox prevails more or less in all the slave centres, it follows that these miserable human beings fall victims to the disease

without the smallest chance of recovery, so that their number is often reduced to one half, from this cause alone, during their march to the coast."

M. Hodister, a Belgian pioneer of commerce, and a close observer, whose treacherous death will be described in a later chapter, gives the following graphic description of a night attack by a party of slave hunters on a village in which he was staying:—

"It is four o'clock in the morning,—a great calm prevails, only the soft and melancholy cry of the African owl is to be heard; the village sentinels are either withdrawn, or squatting low—asleep; the houses are closed, everyone sleeps, all is repose, the sense of security is absolute. Suddenly, the sound of a gun, then cries of terror are raised, breaking the great silence, followed by a fusillade, which seems to come from all sides, piercing the straw walls: the boatmen have fired, leaving their canoes to their women,—they have rushed forward, attacking the village in front, while the others are assailing it from the rear. The inhabitants, suddenly roused from their sleep, terrified rush out of their houses. They are panic-stricken—forgetting everything, wives, children; their first thought is of flight—to conceal themselves in the wood. The panic is at its height; rifle shots, horrible cries, resound, mixing with the shrieks of fear from the women and children; then follow the stifled noise of a struggle at close quarters, of falling bodies, a suppressed groan, sharp cries of agony; the ground shakes under the tread of the combatants and the fugitives. Soon afterwards appears a star in the blackness of the night, a dry crackling sound is heard: it is a detached hut fired by the enemy, to light them in their work without the risk of burning the whole village. Before doing that, they wish to pillage it. A few of the inhabitants have meantime seized their weapons and attempt some resistance, but in a little time this is overcome by superior numbers. To the noise of the

fight succeed the cries of the prisoners, of the wounded and the dying. The horizon lightens, the sun rises suddenly and illumines this field of carnage and desolation. Then they kill the wounded, bind the prisoners, and begin the pillage of the village. Every house is visited and plundered of everything it contains. When the sack has been completed, the village is set on fire and burned to the ground. Where in the evening there had been a pretty village surrounded by a plantation like a covering of verdure, a gay and happy population, there was no longer anything but a great black empty spot—men, women, and children tied to one another promiscuously, corpses strewing the ground, blood puddles emitting an acrid fearful smell, and the assassins horrible in their war paint, which had run during the struggle with their sweat and blood. Ah! what a picture! Who then could describe its horror?"

An official writer, using the cold and measured language of a report, estimated that the average number of slaves captured in the interior who reached the coast was only ten per cent. The other ninety per cent. perished *en route*, either from disease, or butchered by their captors.

So far, only that form of slave hunting which was carried on for the supply of a foreign market has been touched upon, but it is impossible to ignore the cruel side of the slavery existent and sanctioned by usage among the blacks themselves. With them the slaves consist of two classes: hereditary slaves,—who are scarcely to be distinguished from their masters, and share the prosperity of the family to which they are attached,—and slaves of an outside tribe, who have either been vanquished in battle or captured during some successful raid. These experienced far harsher usage, but even their fate would have been tolerable but for the fact that from these the victims of the fetish magicians were selected. These victims of an insensate and ruthless superstition experi-

enced all the ferocity of the tribe before being passed into the hands of the tribal executioner. Fastened by a weight to the foot, or round the neck, the unfortunate victim lay exposed to the jeers and blows of the crowd for days, and sometimes weeks, before the date fixed for the execution. This form of cruelty, prevalent throughout Central Africa, was another cause of human suffering, scarcely less widespread or distressing in its character than that inflicted by the slave hunters. Thousands of lives were offered up every year to appease the superstitious, and, in return for the human victims placed in their hands, the fetish men promised success in war and immunity from disease or famine.

From these two causes—the systematic proceedings of the slave hunters, and the general practice of a debasing superstition, which demanded human sacrifices on a large scale—there prevailed in the whole region now covered by the authority of the State a condition of affairs characterised by shocking cruelty, and attended by the gradual destruction of the indigenous population. Its indefinite continuance would have entailed the complete desolation of the whole region from the middle Congo to Khartoum on the one side, and Zanzibar on the other; and what was said by the various travellers of the fate of villages would have been said with equal truth of the whole of Central Africa. It would have become one great black empty spot.

The revelation of these facts startled and impressed the world. It was no longer possible to assume that the worst horrors of the slave trade had been ended by the disappearance of the old slave-carrying vessels from the high seas, or that the duty of repressing the evil was discharged by stationing a few gunboats on the East Coast of Africa to capture slave dhows. Something more than this was demanded if the advanced peoples of the world were to be cleared from the charge of indifference. A renewed

effort was called for to ensure the success of the policy that had been consistently followed by England for three-quarters of a century, and to which Europe at the Congress of Vienna had accorded its approbation and moral support. The blacks marked out for an unhappy destiny had to be saved from the sufferings imposed upon so large a proportion of the race by ignorance, and the degraded conditions under which it existed, as well as from the cruelties of the Arab raiders. It appealed to the conscience of the nations with the force of an imperative duty, and there was a profound sentiment to the effect that, at all hazards, something should be done to clear the reputations of happier nations from the charge of callousness. The possibility that complete success in the accomplishment of the task might carry with it some tangible reward in the dim and distant future must not be held to detract from the nobility of the original purpose, nor can we justly impute selfish motives when the result proves that some persons have shown more prescience and greater sagacity than the rest of the world. It was the cry of outraged humanity, the appeal from those in distress, that first drew King Leopold's attention to Central Africa. Long before the Congo was named, or trade and empire could have been thought of, he set the example of attacking the slave trade from the side of Zanzibar and Tanganyika.

It was in consequence of the King's efforts that the Pope, in 1888, sanctioned the commencement of the anti-slavery campaign, and, after inviting the Governments of Europe to combine in putting an end to the hideous traffic called the slave trade, and to remove this plague spot so that it should no longer dishonour the human race, he entrusted the execution of the project and the realisation of the design to Cardinal Lavigerie, a man whose name will always be associated with the suppression of slavery in Africa, and whose fiery eloquence lent new

strength to an old cause. Before describing the formation of the Anti-Slavery Society at Brussels, the clear and emphatic language of Leo XIII. deserves record. It shows at least that the information brought back by missionaries and travellers had not been thrown away or fallen on deaf ears. "This ignoble traffic in men is no longer carried on on sea, but on land it is prosecuted still, and in the most barbarous fashion. As the Mohammedans consider the Ethiopians and other similar races little better than brutes, it is a horrible thing to see with what perfidy and cruelty they treat them. Falling suddenly on them like brigands at the moment they are least expected, they destroy all they possess—villages, hamlets, huts; ravaging, pillaging everything; they take, without difficulty, men, women, and children, chain and lead them off to the most infamous markets: Egypt, Zanzibar, and part of the Soudan, are the districts from which these abominable expeditions are fitted out. The men, loaded with chains, with scarcely anything to eat, are forced to make long marches under blows. Those who have not the strength to make the march are killed; the survivors are put up to sale like beasts, and exposed before the impudent purchaser. As each is sold, he finds himself or herself torn from children, husband, wife, or parent."

Cardinal Lavignerie, Archbishop of Algiers, who had for many years devoted his life to the cause of the negro races of Africa, and to whose eloquence Leo XIII. trusted for a movement that should emulate that of Peter the Hermit, began his campaign at Brussels in the national Cathedral of St. Gudule. The following passages will give some idea of the eloquent address he delivered on this occasion, and its effect was seen in the formation of the Belgian Anti-Slavery Society, and the campaign commenced on Lake Tanganyika some years later.

"It was here in Brussels that all that represents science—noble initiative—assembled ten years ago, under

the presidency of your King, to approach the study of African problems. Action was not slow to follow thought. Explorers, intrepid officers, later on devoted and capable administrators, offered themselves, risking their lives. Some are dead on the field of honour, others have made admirable discoveries, and the face of our continent has been changed. . . . Thus was the good seed sown. All seemed to assure a harvest without mixture. But I must have recourse to a parable, 'Whilst his apostles slept.' You have slept, Catholics of Belgium! You have not given, from the point of view of religion, to the diffusion of Christian truth, to the struggle with barbarism, all the assistance that was your duty. Your King would open before you a country sixty times as large as your own, an immense field for proselytising and charity. Is there an object that ought more to excite the zeal of a Catholic people? Yet—I say it with sadness—from this standpoint you have not done enough.

"Noblesse oblige. You have throughout the world an incomparable reputation for generosity in all charitable works—too great, perhaps, for the wish of some, for it draws upon you all who have to ask favours; but, whilst you thus sustain Christian work in all parts of the world, you have too much forgotten the part of Africa which bears henceforth your name. This is not all. Whilst you have slept, the main enemy, the barbarism which in Africa is the enemy of all the efforts of Europe, has done his work. Do you assent, therefore, Christian Belgians, to receive much longer, without shuddering, the echoes of these butcheries? Do you wish to bear this dishonour before history?"

The remainder of this oration was devoted to the practical suggestions that promised the most complete and satisfactory result. The interdiction of the importation of firearms and powder to the Arabs and half-breeds, and their punishment with banishment if they did not submit,

were the chief precautionary and punitive measures. The active and the more practical measures were to place a steamer and a hundred armed men on Lake Tanganyika, and then cut off the main slave route from the heart of Africa to Zanzibar. The outcome of this appeal was the founding of the Anti-Slavery Society of Belgium ; and at a later period the story of the work it accomplished towards the extinction of the slave trade, which was some years later happily effected throughout the Congo State, will be told in connection with the overthrow of Arab power in Manyema.

Before leaving Belgium to continue his noble propagandist work, Cardinal Lavigerie, to whose influence the adoption of the flag of the Association and of the Congo State—the golden star on the azure ground, the star of hope on the undimmed background of heaven—was due, formed the Committee that was to guide the work of the new Society. In other countries than Belgium the Cardinal succeeded in stimulating activity, and in giving practical point to the desire that everyone naturally felt to see an end put to the cruelty of the chief remaining branch of the slave trade. In France, Austria, Spain, and other countries of the Continent, committees were formed and funds raised for the anti-slavery cause, and in England, where the Anti-Slavery Society had existed for half a century, a fresh impulse was given to an old and noble movement. In this manner the campaign of Cardinal Lavigerie contributed to the success of the whole movement, by exciting increased interest, raising fresh funds, and uniting the efforts made from different centres towards a common object.

The Committee formed in Belgium had as its president Lieutenant-General Jacmart, and as vice-president Monsignor Jacobs of St. Gudule. The honorary secretary was the Count d'Ursel, and Captain Storms, the Belgian officer who had founded the station of Mpala on Lake

Tanganyika, supplied the local and technical knowledge that was required.

But, in giving the suppression of the slave trade the first place among the higher objects that called for European intervention in Central Africa, and that attracted the attention and energy of the King of the Belgians to the spot, we should not overlook the fact that there were other forms of barbarism and brutality that called for suppression, and that were hardly less of a blot on civilisation than the horrors of the slave trade. Cannibalism was scarcely less horrible than the incidents of the Arab razzias ; and cannibalism, in its worst and most repulsive forms, prevailed over large tracts of Central Africa. Far too little attention has been given to this branch of the subject. Missionaries and travellers who have expatiated on the iniquities of the slave trade have passed by, without a word of censure or an expression of horror, the fact that the people to a large extent lived upon one another. Here and there, no doubt, they use the phrase, in description, "This tribe is one of cannibals," and the reader's imagination is left to supply the rest. Yet, of the two crimes, the greater must surely be to eat your brother man, than to make him a slave and treat him cruelly.

Both form part of the same devilish system of human cruelty and depravity which have for centuries kept the negro race on a scale little raised above the brute ; and if there were to be a durable improvement in the position and views of the races of Central Africa, it became as indispensable that cannibalism should be ended as that Arab raids should cease. Indeed this was for the State the more difficult task, and one that needed much more than the presence of a gunboat on the Lakes, or even a successful campaign in Manyema to achieve. It called for a sustained effort, not only in the way of suppression, but in the education of the negroes to higher views. The

difficulty was immensely increased by the fact that cannibalism was not solely inspired by necessity, and consequently reformers could not assume that the difficulty of getting food had only to be removed for the system to fall to the ground. Many tribes ate their own kind in preference to animal food, and bartered their goats and chickens for men with other tribes not given so strongly to anthropophagy. The subject is a repulsive one, but it claims some notice; and the following extract from Dr. Hinde's interesting work, *The Fall of the Congo Arabs*, will give it first hand:—

“Nearly all the tribes in the Congo basin either are, or have been, cannibals, and among some of them the practice is on the increase. . . . The captains of the steamers have often assured me that, whenever they try to buy goats from the natives, slaves are demanded in exchange, and the natives often come on board with tusks of ivory or other money with the intention of buying a slave, complaining that meat is scarce in their neighbourhood. Judging from what I have seen of these people, they seem fond of eating human flesh, and, though it may be an acquired taste, there is not the slightest doubt in my mind that they prefer human flesh to any other. . . . The preference of different tribes for various parts of the human body is interesting. Some cut long steaks from the flesh of the thighs, legs, or arms; others prefer the hands or feet; and though the great majority do not eat the head, I have come across more than one tribe which prefers the head to any other part. . . . Neither old nor young, women nor children, are exempt from the possibility of serving as food for their conquerors or neighbours.”

It is unnecessary to enter further into the details of this horrible topic, or to describe a system for which the only advantage claimed was that it prevented the spread of epidemics after a field of battle, because all the slain and wounded were eaten up by the victorious party. But it

is important to note not only the existence of this blot on the claim of negroes to be regarded as members of the human race, but also its direct connection with the system of slavery and slave hunting. Among the causes explaining the strength and endurance of that system, the practice of man-eating was a scarcely less potent agency than the supply of the foreign merchants through the Arab razzias. Human beings were captured for purposes of food as well as of labour or amusement. If the latter objects were due to foreign greed and tyranny, as well as to the general assumption that the blacks were inferior in every respect to the rest of mankind, the former was a national practice, not restricted to any particular tribe, going back to the age of Herodotus, but generally followed throughout the whole region, and, until a short time ago, finding fresh converts in all directions.

The suppression of these seourges, slavery and cannibalism, was the noble humanitarian object that drew the attention and the energy of the King of the Belgians to the heart of Africa. The founding of the Congo State provided the sure means of converting a laudable aspiration into an accomplished triumph, but the original merit in the disinterestedness of motive, and the high aim that inspired its founder, must be recognised and appreciated. Before closing the history of what may be called the preliminary or structural building up of the means of success, and commencing that of the actual work accomplished, it may be pointed out that, even before Europe had sanctioned the founding of the Congo State, some intelligent persons had realised the probability of success, and anticipated the magnitude of the coming triumph. Gordon, who might himself have been the chief instrument of the King's great design, if a cruel fate had not lured him to Khartoum,—who had put down the slave chase in Egyptian territory with the hand of a master,—declared, before the State was founded, that “no such efficacious

means of cutting at the root of the slave trade ever was presented as that which God has, I trust, opened out to us through the kind disinterestedness of His Majesty King Leopold." In the same document he wrote, "We will track the slave traders to their haunts, and kill them there;" and although he was not destined to do it, the thing has now been done, and his words have come true.

CHAPTER VI

THE EARLIER CAMPAIGNS

WHILE Europe was deliberating on the destiny of Central Africa, and the public of the civilised world was being stimulated to fresh efforts for the final suppression of the slave trade, Belgian officers had not been inactive in the practical work of administration and pacification in the Congo basin. The thread of that story of definite achievement may now be taken up where we left it at the end of the second chapter. The arrangement by which the advanced position established at Stanley Falls was resigned to Tippu Tip as a temporary measure has been explained, but it was far from signifying an abandonment of the original intention to make the suppression of the slave trade the corner-stone of the great projected colony in Central Africa. Neither did it indicate any diminution of ardour, as the events to be now described will show; and this prudent measure is best described by the French phrase, *Reculer pour mieux sauter*.

After the retirement from Stanley Falls, the King sent instructions for the formation of entrenched camps on the Aruwimi and Lomami, the two great affluents—one north and the other south of the Congo—immediately west of Stanley Falls. These camps would certainly prevent the Arabs making any forward movement from the Bahr Gazelle and Upper Nile, or from the side of Manyema, in consequence of the occurrences at Stanley Falls. The necessity for these steps was clearly established by the

soon proved inability of Tippu Tip to keep his countrymen in check, while the station established by the Arabs at Yambuya on the Aruwimi, with the tacit assent of the Belgian authorities during the Emin Relief Expedition, was a standing menace to the region between the Aruwimi and the Uelle. The camp on the Aruwimi was, for this reason, more urgently needed than that on the Lomami; but the Arabs were so firmly placed at Yambuya that it was necessary to proceed against them with much caution, and, as an open rupture was above all things to be avoided, tact and patience were the agencies to which the Belgian officers were instructed to look for success.

In October 1888 the advanced guard of the Aruwimi Expedition, which was entrusted to the command in chief of Captain Roget, left the Bangala district. Lieutenant Dhanis led this small force, and founded several stations on the north bank of the Congo. Captain Van Kerckhoven, of whom much will be heard later on, was at this time in charge of the Bangala district, and he superintended in person the formation of the Aruwimi camp at Basoko, the point of junction of that stream with the Congo. These steps were taken in anticipation of the arrival from Europe of Captain Roget. With the view of cutting off the communications by which the Arabs retreated with their booty and prisoners to Yambuya and Stanley Falls, several fresh posts were founded on the Lulu stream, a little north of Basoko. The gradual extension of these stations up the Lulu placed a barrier in the path of the Arabs. But the difficulty was then to draw a clear and satisfactory line between the legitimate and illegitimate proceedings of the Arabs, who had been given permission under the Tippu Tip arrangement to trade within the State territory. Evidence was easily obtained that the Arabs took ivory from the blacks by force, and that, when the blacks refused to hand over their stores, they were compelled to disclose where they had concealed them, by the

torture of burning their feet. Still the Belgian officers had to restrain themselves, and wait till the necessary arrangements had been completed for the recovery of the ground, perhaps prematurely occupied, and certainly lost for the moment after the incident of Stanley Falls.

But if the Arab position was too strong for attack,



BASOKOS.

there was no reason for making it stronger, and Captain Roget perceived that he would only do so if he were to carry out the proposed expedition to the Uelle in accordance with the original instructions. By them the Arabs of Stanley Falls were to be associated in the task, and he was to trust to their guidance, and especially to that of

Selim-ben-Mohamed, for the advance through an unknown region to the Uelle. Had this arrangement been carried out, there can be no doubt that the Arabs of the Uelle, who came from the Soudan, would have coalesced with those of the Falls, who came from Zanzibar, and that the difficulties in the path of the Belgians would have been immensely increased. As it was, there was good reason to believe that the Arabs contemplated an act of treachery, for many of the negro tribes *en route* were found to be armed with bows and arrows, provided by Selim for the purpose of opposing the Europeans. Captain Roget's merit lay in the skill with which he evaded this arrangement. Selim-ben-Mohamed left Basoko with a caravan of ivory for Stanley Falls, and it was agreed that he should return to play the part of guide. Twelve hours after his departure Captain Roget set out on his march through an unknown region, and, when the Arabs learnt what had been done, he was already firmly established on the Uelle.

As a preliminary measure, a station was established at Ibembo on the Itimbiri, about one hundred and twenty miles north of Basoko, and the commandant received orders to prevent all Arab bands passing the river below that point. It was to Ibembo that Roget hastened by water as soon as Selim had fairly set out on his home journey, while Lieutenant Bodson was left in charge of the camp at Basoko. With one European comrade, Sub-Lieutenant Milz, and a small force, Roget made his way through an unknown region, and without guides, to the bank of the Uelle, where he received a cordial welcome from Sultan Djabbir, the most powerful ruler in this district. With that chief he established very friendly relations, and they made together several expeditions north of the Uelle, which were interrupted by the fact that the term of service of most of his men was expiring, and they would not re-engage for a further period. The region explored

was found to be extremely fertile, carefully cultivated, and thickly populated.

Sultan Djabbir was an enlightened chief, who rendered the State much service. He had established his position in the teeth of the opposition of his elder brothers, and his authority was recognised by many tribes besides his own,



SULTAN DJABBIR.

the Azandés, or, as they are called in Egypt, the Niam Niam. These men are very courageous, and are specially trained to the use of the spear and the bow. They promise to be a most valuable military contingent in the State service, and it is pertinent to recall the fact that General Gordon saw their military qualities at a glance,

and took some of them into his service in the year 1876. The following few lines describe the facts: "An accident brought him into contact with a party of the Niam Niam, a tribe of cannibals from the interior of Africa, but possessing a martial spirit and athletic frames. Gordon looked at them with the eye of a soldier, and enrolled fifty of them on the spot. He also described them as thick-set and sturdy, as well as very fierce, brave, and fearless." As Djabbir controlled one of the most numerous branches of



GROUP OF WOMEN (DJABIR).

this somewhat scattered race, his allegiance has proved of the greatest practical value to the Congo authorities, and he has rendered much practical service, in the provision of carriers and canoes, towards the successful accomplishment of the State policy. The station at Djabbir is one of the most important near the northern frontier, and brick houses and a well-built post for the storage of supplies make it a useful base.

The Niam Niam are an intelligent and industrious as well as a brave people. They are exceedingly skilful as

pottery, wood carvers, and workers in leather. They also weave a cloth which is said to be in no way inferior to that of Europe. Their mode of life is simple, but polygamy is in general vogue, and furnishes the chief means of displaying wealth. The code of justice is very simple, and in cases of adultery the punishment is death for the woman, and mutilation by cutting off of the hands and ears for the man. Although anthropophagy is common and even general among this race, it is not universal, and the belief is held, under the metempsychosis which is the religion of the Niam Niam, that the leopards into which their warriors are turned consist of two classes—the man-eating leopard, who still must feed on his brother man, and the less fierce kind of leopard, which will not attack man. On the other hand, women are supposed to become an exceedingly dangerous kind of serpent; and they believe in a river spirit—a sort of Lurelei, half-fish half-woman—that attacks all liars who may venture on the waters of the Uelle.

The Roget Expedition was supplemented by that under Captain Van Gele, who had already led two expeditions up the Ubangi, and established the connection between that river and the Uelle, in the manner described in the second chapter. About the same time that Roget was engaged in founding Basoko, Van Gele steamed up the Ubangi on two steamers, accompanied by six European officers, of whom it is only necessary to name Captain George Le Marinel, of the Belgian Engineers. His instructions were very similar to those of the other officers, viz. to found a succession of stations along the river; and it was hoped that the two expeditions would eventually succeed in joining hands on the Uelle. Van Gele, an officer of exceptional ability and energy, succeeded in forcing a way with one of his steamers—the other failing in the attempt—past the Zongo Cataract, and founded several stations, of which Banzyville was the most im-

portant. During the further course of the expedition Van Gele came into relations with Bangasso, another of the great sultans of the north, holding the country west of that possessed by the Sultan Djabbir.

This chief held the region watered by the Mbomu stream, which is by some considered to be, in preference to the Uelle, the main course of the Ubangi. He deserves the credit of having seen, with equal promptitude to that of Djabbir, the policy of being on good terms with the Europeans. A summary of the formal interview between this chief and the Belgian officer will interest the reader.

“The King, preceded by his guard, marched in front, followed by a small squadron composed of his daughters. They are pledged to celibacy, because there is no prince sufficiently powerful to aspire to their hands ; but this celibacy does not prove tedious to these young ladies, for the King, their father, leaves them beyond the vow complete liberty, of which they make use. The sides of the rectangular plain were lined by two thousand troops armed with bucklers and spears, while in front of a hall, erected for shelter against wet weather, stood thirty Soudanese soldiers, who fired salvoes in our honour. These men were Azandés or, as the Soudanese call them, Niam Niam. They have a fierce bearing, robust figures, and seemed to me very devoted to Bangasso. He gives them each a wife and a slave. Their profession is that of arms, and they receive a share in the chase. The King himself advanced very slowly, enjoying the opportunity of being able to show off his power before us. In the evening Bangasso paid us a visit without ceremony, accompanied by two soldiers, a wife, and the small squadron of his daughters. To a late hour of the night we sat discussing matters, drinking the good sorghum beer, and smoking our pipes. For several hours I fancied I was no longer in Africa.”

From Bangasso's state Van Gele succeeded in making his way to Djabbir across country from Mbomu, for,

unfortunately, navigation up the Uelle was found to be impossible. The result of these two expeditions was the effective establishment of the State's authority along the Ubangi and the Uelle, while a large number of new stations were founded between the Congo and these northern affluents. A still greater number of chiefs agreed to hoist the blue flag, and to welcome Europeans as friends. With a view to completing the good work effected by the Roget and Van Gele Expeditions, it was next decided to send a stronger force under Captain Van



VAN KERCKHOVEN.

Kerckhoven into the Upper Uelle country. The object of this expedition, in addition to the obvious necessity of completing the work that had been done by its immediate predecessors, was to further isolate the Arabs on the Aruwimi by cutting off their communications with the Nile. It will thus be seen, that although not a shot had been fired on the Arabs, and the strict letter of the convention with Tippu Tip had been

scrupulously observed, very effective measures were being taken to undermine their power, and with it to accomplish the downfall of the slave trade.

The Van Kerckhoven Expedition, interesting in itself and important as extending the effective authority of the State over the whole of the north-east region to the Nile, calls for more detailed notice than has yet been given to it outside the official narrative that records its history. It was on the 4th February 1891 that Captain Van Kerckhoven left Leopoldville, with fourteen officers, several non-commissioned officers, and a strong body of black

troops, each man carrying a Mauser rifle and one hundred and fifty cartridges. There were also six thousand men-loads, in supplies and merchandise, and the fighting force was composed mainly of Haussas, perhaps the best race of fighting men on the West Coast. It had also a small artillery train, including one Krupp gun and several Hotchkiss quick-firers. Two of the larger steamers of the State — the *City of Brussels* and the *City of Antwerp* — conveyed the expedition, which was, from every point of view, the largest and the best equipped that had up to that moment been despatched to the eastward of Leopoldville. In conjunction with it was also available the force of Djabbir, with whom Lieutenant Milz had already been left as Resident. While the main expedition steamed up the Congo and the Itimbiri to the highest navigable point, Captain Ponthier was sent overland with an advanced guard to establish communications with the post at Djabbir, and to lay the basis of a common action. The march of Captain Ponthier across an unknown country was attended by great difficulties, and his Haussas almost deserted him *en masse* when the exigencies of the march rendered it necessary to call on them to carry some of the loads. Bomokandi, above Djabbir, had been named as the point of concentration for the expedition; and thither Van Kerckhoven, after visiting Stanley Falls to explain to Rashid, the nephew of Tippu Tip, the objects of the expedition (for everything was done in form), proceeded by the Itimbiri. In the meantime Djabbir had entered thoroughly into the scheme, and, to show his loyalty, had solicited and obtained a fixed military rank in the State service. He was assigned the rank of captain in the Public Force.

The value of a native ally having been so clearly established in the case of Djabbir, it is not surprising that the State officers should have resolved to win over to

their side his neighbour, the Sultan Semio. This potentate was also a Niam Niam, and Lieutenant Milz, who was entrusted with the mission, described him as being a man of forty years of age, of middle height and rather stout, but possessing a highly intelligent face. In fact, said this officer, "I was greatly struck with his appearance, although all the Azandés possess a certain distinction." Semio was the chief who had endeavoured to aid Lupton Bey against the Mahdists in the Bahr Gazelle in 1883, and on this occasion he welcomed the Belgians with exceptional cordiality. He readily agreed to hoist the flag of the State, and to co-operate in the campaign in the Upper Uelle. He and his neighbour, Rafai, undertook to send contingents to Bomokandi. Semio made this remarkable speech: "I only ask to be appreciated by what I do. I will help you to the end of your task, and let not the thought of my state being deprived of its chief disturb you, for my son Bedowé is there, and will carry on my work."

While Milz was meeting with success in his mission, Ponthier had pushed on to Bomokandi at the head of two hundred and thirty men, and founded a station there in the immediate proximity of the Arab force. The Arabs made no attempt to conceal their hostility, and resorted to every means in their power to prevent the Belgians from holding their position. They ordered the natives, under pain of death, to withhold all supplies, and they gave out that they alone were the masters of the country. As they occupied a very strong natural position on an island above Bomokandi, Captain Ponthier did not feel able to attack them until a reinforcement under Captain Daenen had reached him. For one month he had to wait as patiently as he could, while the Arabs lorded it over the region in the conviction that he would soon be starved out; and then one morning, when the confidence of the Arabs was at its

height, he delivered his attack, drove them out of their position, and the blacks, rising throughout the whole region, turned on their persecutors and massacred them all. After this success, the first obtained over the Arabs, and rendered more significant by the fact that Rashid was present, Ponthier awaited the arrival of his chief, Van Kerckhoven, whose movements had been hindered by the refusal of the Bassango tribe to provide carriers and crews for the canoes. In consequence of their holding aloof, the Belgian commander had to retire to Djabbir, and to solicit the aid of that chief in obtaining men to work his canoes.

On 20th September 1891 Van Kerckhoven left Djabbir with sixty canoes, and the difficulty of labour having been overcome, the expedition succeeded in making its way up the Uelle and establishing the important fact of its navigability for canoes. The defeat of the Arabs near Bomokandi had led to a concentration of Arab forces under a chief named Said, in the region farther east. It was rumoured that he intended to assume the offensive, and the negro races recently freed from their tyranny, or hoping to be soon rescued by the white man, sent many petitions to the Belgian commander to hasten his movements, and thus come to their rescue.

The march above Bomokandi was attended with special difficulties, among which the inability of the canoes to pass several rapids was not the least. The Arabs had also ravaged the whole region, and for a considerable distance the march was made through a deserted country. To this succeeded the thickly-peopled villages of the Mangbettus, but their hostility was shown in a marked form. They shouted from the banks, "Turks, Arabs, whites, men of Semio, all liars, thieves and dogs," and then, to make their meaning clearer, they called out "Ponshio! Ponshio!" the euphemistic name for human flesh. The most hostile chief of this region was Sange-

bouno, mentioned by Dr. Junker, and he tried to rally all the tribes to common action by declaring, "Foreigners have always deceived us; we have been the prey successively of the Azandés, the Turks, and the Arabs. Are the whites worth more! No, beyond doubt. But whatever they be, our territory is to-day freed from the presence of any foreigner, and to introduce another would be an act of cowardice. I do not wish to be the slave of anyone, and I will fight against the whites."

The more formidable opponents to be encountered were still the Arabs, who had founded several fortified camps, or zeribas, and, as a preliminary to attacking these, the Belgian leader formed a fortified camp, in which he placed the women and children, who always accompanied these expeditions, under a guard of one hundred men. Then Van Kerekhoven set out in pursuit of the Arabs. During several days the pursuit was kept up, but in vain; and the terrified natives, afraid to reveal the truth, concealed the Arab movements from their own would-be deliverers. During these operations the fortunes of the Belgians sank to the lowest point of the whole of the enterprise. Captain Ponthier became so ill that he had to return to the base, and to leave for home. The troops lost heart, and one of them had to be shot for desertion. The natives echoed the words of Sangebouno, and showed marked hostility. Van Kerekhoven's courage and confidence remained unabated, and proved, fortunately, the means of carrying the enterprise to a successful end; but for the moment he saw that it was necessary to retire to his fortified camp on the Makua or Uelle.

In this difficult situation the loyalty of the chief Semio afforded real grounds of encouragement. He showed himself loyal, straightforward, and disinterested, and in the midst of the prevailing depression he declared, "My soldiers and all of us are at the service of the Government, and we ought to observe the laws; if my own son

were blameworthy, I would hand him over to judgment. I do not wish them to say in Europe that we are only savages." But if Semio was a loyal ally, his troops were also valuable. Well trained in bodies of fifty men, they were subjected to a regular discipline, and they marched through a hostile or dubious country in accordance with a set rule. The bulk of his men were of the Azandé race, but some of the fighting tribes of Central Africa were permitted to serve with them. Among these the



A NATIVE VILLAGE (SEMIO).

Barambos were the most numerous. These people rank among the most promising of all the races of this region. They are good cultivators, and fond of the chase. Their intelligence is considerable, their women are good-looking, and they only needed protection to reach a considerable degree of prosperity. Their internal divisions, unfortunately, placed them at the mercy of the Arabs, and the Niam Niam, who equally made them slaves. The rescue of these people was the object and the reward of the Van Kerckhoven Expedition.

Among the chief opponents of the expedition in this early stage of its progress was the Niam Niam chief N'gaie, who refused to follow the example of Djabbir and Semio. In a skirmish his father, Mongo, was shot, and he vowed to take a bitter revenge. One of his men sang outside the camp at night a doggerel verse to the effect that he would cut off the heads of all the white men, and that even this would be an inadequate vengeance for the death of Mongo. Van Kerckhoven, finding all his attempts to establish a friendly relationship with this chief vain, set out at the head of the bulk of his force to bring him to reason. The bitterness of the struggle may be inferred from the fact that at the entrance to N'gaie's territory was found the head of Mongo exposed on a tree, the body having been consumed, as a warning to the white expedition of the fate awaiting them. In the skirmishes that followed, his soldiers showed great bravery, advancing under the heaviest fire, singing songs and raising their battle-cries. Although suffering considerable loss, N'gaie succeeded in inducing them to risk a general battle, by the allegation that the whites were the prisoners of Semio, and that it was only with him they had to deal. The completeness of their defeat did not prevent the most strenuous opposition being offered to the advance of the expedition the whole way from Amadis to Surunga; but at the last-named place the Belgian commander decided to accept the nominal submission of the tribes and to call a halt.

The Mangbettu chief, Mai Munza, having solicited the aid of the Europeans, a force was sent under Lieutenant Milz with the Semio contingent to render him such help as might seem judicious against his rival, Yangara. Although the expedition lost *en route* eighteen men with their guns, captured in an ambushade, it reached its destination, where Mai Munza accorded it a hearty welcome. The chief cause of enmity between these two men

was that Yangara was regarded, rightly or wrongly, as having acted the part of traitor when the Arabs made an inroad into the region and killed or carried off some of Mai Munza's relatives. In revenge the last-named chief sought the aid of the Arabs to crush Yangara, and now he hoped that the Europeans would do the same. A brief experience showed Lieutenant Milz that Mai Munza was a weak and worthless chief, and at the same moment Yangara sent in a request for the protection of the whites. In him the Belgians at once recognised a man of ability, as the following description will show:—
“Unfavourably regarded by his neighbours, Yangara possesses, on the other hand, the confidence and esteem of the numerous and different races which inhabit his country. He is considered very wise, and a great warrior. An excellent and elegant orator, he can provoke in turn the enthusiasm, the astonishment, and the indignation of his audience in the native assemblies. Some have accused him of being weak and of listening only to his wife Nenzima, called by the Arabs Tom Seina. The fact is that the fate of many men lies in the hands of this woman, and that she inspires much fear, but her wisdom is generally admitted. He is of middle height, strongly built, and active despite his mature age.”

At that moment Yangara had recently defended himself with success against an Arab raid promoted by one of his neighbours, but he had only warded off the blow by giving his chief village to the flames. He realised the full extent of the peril to which he was exposed, and he said frankly that only the Europeans could save him. He was right. They arrived at the very moment that all his neighbours had combined to crush him, and it was solely due to the caution and judgment shown by Lieutenant Milz that their projects were not realised. The immediate consequence of this wise action was that his Mangbettus, like the Barambos, were saved from

internal dissolution, and that the Arabs were unable to grasp the prize, on which they already counted, in a vast region that had been almost free from their raids.

There still remained for settlement the question with N'gaie, and the Mabanga and Embata tribes of the bend of the Uelle pursued an unbending attitude of hostility. In April 1892 the preparations were finished for the attack on this truculent chieftain, and even the Mangbettus, under their late rival chiefs, Yangara and Mai Munza, were assigned a part in the campaign. In fact, the State forces themselves, having gained a position east of the country to be subjected, were held to some extent in reserve. But the necessity for settling the question by the sword was, fortunately, averted. After two months' correspondence, and by having recourse to a system of what might be called effective demonstration, M. Milz succeeded in bringing even N'Gaie round to a reasonable frame of mind, while the other Azandé chiefs of that zone gave in their adhesion to the State without a dissentient voice.

In the meantime Van Kerckhoven continued his march with the main force towards the Nile. Part followed the water route in thirty canoes to Mbitima, where a new station was founded; the other half travelled overland. Both suffered considerably, as much from the exceptionally heavy rains as from the alleged general unhealthiness of the region, which, however, greatly improved on reaching the hilly tracts watered by the Kibali. Here Emin Pasha said anyone ought to be able to live. The Belgian commander added his testimony in the following words: "The country is fine, fertile, well watered, and sufficiently picturesque." In this region the great chief was Uando, the most formidable of the old enemies of Yangara. Van Kerckhoven gave a very interesting account of his reception of this potentate—an immense creature, whose rolls of flesh concealed the powerful force of his

mind. The strength of his constitution was proved by the soundness of his teeth, and his nobility by the length of his nails. He made the following speech, promising allegiance for himself and his family to the State :—" I can now die tranquilly, for the fate of my children and my state is assured. I am certain that, far from disputing among themselves, my sons will solicit permission to extend their possessions, and that Government will aid them to do so. The State can count on our aid and our devotion. I desire to sign a treaty similar to that with Semio, and which will shield us against invasion." The difficulty was indeed to control the desire of these tribes to possess a wide sway, as the ambition and greed of the Niam Niam were insatiable. One of the minor races begged Van Kerckhoven to decide who was their master, Uando or Yangara, as they were "between the hammer and the anvil." Another chief came with the same tale : "Protect me from the covetousness of these two powerful chiefs." The position of the Belgian authorities, who had to conciliate the great rulers while they protected the little ones, was attended with great difficulty. Its permanent solution was necessarily a work of time, and is still in process of achievement.

During the operations round Mbittima a curious incident took place. Women disappeared from the camp in a mysterious manner, and various explanations were given of the cause. Some said that they were carried off by Uando's men, others that they were the victims of the wild animals. When the truth was discovered, it was found that they had been carried off by the Momvus of Mount Goddo. It was decided with reluctance that this position should be attacked. The attack was made in the morning of the 6th May 1892, and the fight that ensued was one of the most stubborn of the whole campaign. The Momvus were easily driven out of the plantations round the mountain, but then the real fight began. The

natives fought with lances, arrows, and stones, and, when driven to the summit and called on to surrender, they replied with shouts, and suddenly disappeared into two caverns. It was computed that there were one thousand men, women, and children therein, without food or water, and that in the morning they would have to yield. In this the Belgians were disappointed, and the women and children joined in the defence. For two days the attack slackened in the hope that famine must terminate the struggle; but the desperate garrison held out, and, when a chief came out to arrange terms, it was shown to be a ruse, for during the discussion the Momvus made a sortie. This was repulsed, but not without loss, and the defence was prolonged until the tenth day. By that time the garrison had been reduced to such terrible straits, and the power of the tribe for evil was so completely crushed, that Van Kerckhoven considered he might safely honour the courageous adversary by raising the siege. In coming to this conclusion, he was largely influenced by sanitary motives, as the Momvus had thrown out their dead into his camp on the slopes of the mountain.

Van Kerckhoven was now impressed, above everything, with the necessity of losing no more time in the prosecution of the last stage of his march to the Nile. He therefore collected all his force at Mbittima for a forward movement, and, having been joined by M. Milz with a considerable number of canoes, which were not to be procured at that station, began his march on 6th June. After overcoming many difficulties, the expedition reached in four days the point of junction between the Obi and the Nzoro, and, as the latter or southern branch of the Kibali was represented to be the most navigable, it was selected on this occasion. A few days sufficed to show that the end of the water route had been reached, and that the Nile could be only approached overland. Several of the local tribes, disbelieving the friendly words of the whites,

attacked their camp, but their easy repulse never gave rise to the least cause of anxiety. More serious dangers arose from fever, smallpox, and the dearth of provisions which the tribes held back. Smallpox also attacked Semio's corps, and it was decided that the expedition would have to be rearranged. The bulk of the canoes and the sick were sent back by water to Mbittima, while the remainder marched in two sections to Tagomolongi ($30^{\circ} 50'$ east longitude). One of these bodies had to fight its way



HAUSSAS.

throughout the whole of the route along the Nzoro, losing twelve men by poisoned arrows in one skirmish, and altogether one fourth of its effective strength. When Van Kerekhoven reached that place, the dearth of provisions compelled him to set out on the final stage of his long march.

On the 10th of August, when the force had made good its passage over the Nzoro, still a stream of seventy yards wide, it was suddenly attacked by the tribes of the district. Van Kerekhoven hurried to the front, and, as the enemy

appeared numerous, his servant attendant loaded the reserve Winchester rifle. By a careless movement the servant pressed the trigger, and the gallant Van Kerckhoven fell to the ground, pierced by a fatal bullet. He died at once, and his comrade, Lieutenant Milz, who was by his side, did not hear him utter a sound. In Van Kerckhoven the Congo State lost one of its most brilliant and promising officers. The success achieved in the campaign of the Uelle in rallying the Niam Niams to the side of civilisation, as well as in coercing the Arabs and their allies, was entirely due to his tact and endurance. His friend and lieutenant, M. Milz, has very well summed up his work and character in the following sentences :—

“ Thus fell the valiant and heroic soldier, at the very hour when he had accomplished all the task assigned him. It would suffice to recall the different phases of his admirable government to be struck by the justness of his views, by the plans skilfully conceived and executed with the object of attaining it. Always before commencing a march, he made the most minute dispositions. He was not satisfied with merely passing through a country, but he occupied it. He carefully studied the habits and customs of the natives, and took into account their resources. Besides his remarkable qualities as an explorer and organiser, Captain Van Kerckhoven possessed in the highest possible degree the art of making himself obeyed and loved by those who had the honour to serve under him. Indefatigable and valiant, he always exposed himself and set a personal example of courage and perseverance. Poor Van Kerckhoven! He died before reaching the Nile, already so close at hand. A few marches alone separated him from Wadelai, when he fell from the brutal bullet of his faithful boy, face to face with the enemy, but not from his stroke, as if fate had wished to deny him the supreme consolation of a glorious death on the field of battle. Cruel irony of destiny! After having escaped, as by a miracle, sickness

and the steel of the natives, pitiless death struck him down at the moment when he had won the reward for nine years of labour and devotion to the great work of His Majesty Leopold II."

Deprived by this unfortunate accident of the chief who had led them so far and so well, the expedition was still too close to its destination to retire *re infecta*, and Lieutenant Milz, who succeeded to the command, pushed on. He reached the neighbourhood of the Nile in September 1892, and before the end of the month had established communications with the relics of the Egyptian garrison at Wadelai. These were the last of the old force of Emin Pasha, and, reduced to the lowest straits, the arrival of the Belgians seemed nothing short of providential. On the 9th October M. Milz visited Wadelai himself, and fully corroborated the accuracy of the statements made by the Egyptians as to their want of resources and hopeless position. He also satisfied himself that of "the good work done by Gordon and Emin in Equatoria there remained nothing; the whole province had sunk back into the barbarism from which these two great men had raised it by so many efforts." The arrangement the Belgian officer made with them was to this effect: While he would report their position to his Government, he requested one section to move down the river from Wadelai and take Duffle, and the other to occupy a new post to the west of that place, and on the route to Ganda. The chief reason for this movement was that by it the region of the untamable Lubari tribe, who feared neither white men nor repeating-rifles, would be avoided.

Having done this much, M. Milz found that the retirement of the expedition had become imperative. He founded a camp at Karobe, where he left five Europeans and a hundred and twenty-five blacks, while with fifty-six men and his own faithful Semio he set out to open a new route back to the territory of Uando. He reached this

chief's abode on 18th December 1892, and with this the first expedition to the Nile on the part of the representatives of the Congo State may be said to have concluded. In the official report it is stated, and without exaggeration, that the results obtained were immense. All the north of the State watered by the Uelle and its affluents had been occupied, the Arabs of the east repulsed, and a solid barrier created for the purpose of keeping back the Dervishes. But the more significant part of the work consisted in the extension of the area of effective occupation up to the limits of the State as laid down on the map in a north-easterly direction. The Niam Niams had been made staunch allies, the Barambos and Mangbettus had been saved from the intestine disorders which were gradually causing their disappearance, and in the Momvus and Lubaris two warrior races had been discovered, whose fighting qualities inspired respect, and might prove valuable in the future as auxiliaries.

If these were the general results achieved by the decision to form a camp on the Aruwimi and to carry the ensign of the State up the Uelle, the specific consequences of these steps as a first measure against the Arabs as the promoters of the slave trade were not less gratifying or important. Without provoking a premature rupture with the Arabs of Stanley Falls, or departing from the letter of the convention with Tippo Tip, the reputation of the Arabs and the limits within which they could carry on their raids had both been diminished. The whole of the region between the Uelle and the Congo west of the Aruwimi had been closed to them, for in the Rubi valley Captain Daenen had driven out the Arab slave traders and armed bands as effectually as Van Kerekhoven had done on the Uelle. Several of these bands engaged in the nefarious and forbidden traffic had been destroyed, others had suffered defeat in their efforts to promote discord among the native tribes, and all means of communication be-

tween the Upper Congo and the Nile had been cut off. In this manner was the first step taken towards the achievement of the great result, which was the overthrow of the Arab power as the essential preliminary to the suppression of the traffic and pursuit of slaves. We have passed in review the measures carried out north of the Congo, and in the next chapter we shall have to describe the corresponding steps taken south of the great river in fulfilment of the King's orders to found a camp on the Lomami.

CHAPTER VII

THE OPERATIONS ON THE LOMAMI

THE measures taken on the southern side of the Congo for the creation of an effective barrier against the further encroachments of the Arabs, and of a first parallel in the inevitable attack on the strong position they held throughout the region from Stanley Falls to Tanganyika, were not less skilfully conceived and ably conducted than those taken in the Uelle and Aruwimi valleys, which were described in the last chapter. Here the great river Lomami, with a course due south and north from the 5th parallel of south latitude to the point of junction with the Congo, half-way between Basoko and Stanley Falls, provided a natural line of defence against the raids of the slave hunters. The explorations of M. Alexandre Delcommune had established the identity, and to a great extent the course also, of that river. As agent for the company for commerce and industry on the Upper Congo, M. Delcommune navigated the river as high up as Bena Kamba, on the 3rd parallel south latitude. The information he collected as to the navigability of the river to a much higher point was completely satisfactory and encouraging, but at the same time he reported that the whole region had been devastated and depopulated by the Arabs. These statements were confirmed by an official tour up the same river by the Governor-General, M. Janssen, who followed its course to the highest navigable point at $4^{\circ} 27'$ of south latitude. There he fought a battle with the

Arabs, who began the attack, and defeated them. Before retracing his steps he founded a station at Bena Kamba, and placed there a small garrison of thirty men, under the command of Lieutenant Lenger.

If this was the first step, the next was still more important. Governor-General Janssen proceeded in the same steamer (the *City of Brussels*) with which he had navigated the Lomami to the Kassai, and founded on its affluent, the Sankuru, the important post of Lusambo. The command of this new station was entrusted to one of the Le Marinel brothers, two excellent officers, who gave their lives to the noble task in which they were engaged. Lusambo lies at the point of junction between the Sankuru and its tributary the Lubi; and as it was situated in the midst of a thickly populated region, exposed to the raids of the Arabs, the Belgian authorities were at once brought into collision with their opponents. In one of the most memorable of these encounters, the band of a negro chief named Gongo Lutete, allied with the Arabs, was defeated, and over a thousand slaves were set free. After this decisive action, razzias ceased in the district of which Lusambo might be termed the central point, and the chief Gongo Lutete began to repent of his ways and incline towards the State representatives instead of his old instigators the Arabs.



M. CAMILLE JANSSEN.

The move up the Sankuru was also a step towards the rich district of Katanga, a region reputed to be the richest in mineral wealth of any within the limits of the Congo State, but at that time the seat of a kingdom, ruled by a

bloodthirsty and despotic chief named Msiri. Katanga is the vast tract of country watered by the Lualaba and the Luapula. All travellers agreed in describing it as a land of promise. They also agreed in the description of the potentate who ruled it. Msiri was painted as a tyrant of refined cruelty, who liked best to play the part of executioner, and one of whose favourite amusements was to bury his prisoners to the neck and leave them to starve. What seemed the pearl of the State's possessions was thus in the hands of a tyrannical and inhuman monster. The exploration of Katanga was first entrusted to M. Delcommune, whose good work on the Lomami has been mentioned. At the same time Lieutenant Paul Le Marinel marched from Lusambo to Bena Kamba overland, thus linking the stations on the Sankuru and the Lomami.

It was then decided that the settlement of the question of relationship with Msiri should precede any further steps against the Arabs. A large tract of Africa had been wrested from their possession, or at least the range of their influence, but the moment for striking a decisive blow had not yet arrived. There was, however, no reason whatever for postponing the attempt to come to a settlement with Msiri. With that intention, a trading company for the development of Katanga was established, and in the year 1891 three separate expeditions were fitted out for the purpose of reaching Katanga and bringing it within the range of trade enterprise. These operated from three distinct bases—one from the east coast, another from the Kassai, and the third from the Lomami. The first of these, and the one that was destined to play the larger part in the settlement of future relations with Msiri, was commanded by Captain Stairs, an English officer of Engineers, who had served with Mr. Stanley. With him went Lieutenant Bodson of the Belgian Carabiniers, the Marquis de Bonchamps (a French traveller), and Dr. Moloney. The second was placed under the

command of the Belgian officer Captain Bia, and with him were associated Lieutenants Francqui and Derscheid, Dr. Amerlinck, and Adjutant Spelier. The party headed by Delcommune, proceeding from the Lomami, included Lieutenant Hakansson, M. Diderich (an engineer), Dr. Briart, and Sergeant Cassart in command of the escort.

Some months earlier Lieutenant Paul Le Marinel, the commandant of Lusambo, had led an expedition to Bunkeia, Msiri's capital, and interviewed that potentate, whom he described in the following sentences :—"He is a worn-out old man, emaciated, who would be above the middle height if he was not so bent and shrunk up, so to speak, within himself. His head, when stripped, has a strange form ; it is narrow, and of phenomenal length ; the visage is insignificant, the eyes dim, the mouth large and sunken, the features drawn, the chin covered with a few hairs of an undecided colour. This man is only the shadow of his former self, for if when he speaks a little warmly there is a glimmer of the old fire in his glance, it is at the expense of the rest of the countenance, which wears the grimaces of a weeping boy."

Msiri rejected all the propositions made to him to hoist the flag of the Congo State and to declare himself its tributary. Mr. Sharpe, an English traveller, spoke of him as "a wicked and quarrelsome old man, who believed that every foreigner who came to his country had the intention of seizing it. He executed every day a great number of his subjects, and the palisades round his residence are crowned with the heads of his victims in every stage of decomposition." Before leaving Bunkeia, Le Marinel founded a post on the Lufoi not far from Msiri's capital.

This was the chief against whom the three columns were now instructed to march, but the principal and more dramatic part of the story links itself with that under the command of Captain Stairs. When it left Zanzibar in

July 1891, it consisted of, besides the officers already named, three hundred and fifty-six men and two hundred and ninety-three carriers. After crossing Tanganyika, Stairs made his way to Bunkeia, which he reached on 14th December. On arrival he found that Delcommune had been there one month earlier, and had left to continue his explorations in a southern direction. He had been unable to obtain from Msiri any acknowledgment of the State's supremacy, and at the moment of Stairs' arrival this truculent potentate was in the most perfect state of self-confidence and fancied security.

Msiri, or Msidi, was the son of an ivory and slave merchant, who usurped the power of the chief Sanga, of the Mulundi tribe, and who had carried on for many years the double functions of conqueror and merchant with remarkable success. He may be said to have reached the height of his power in 1890, not so very long before the arrival of the Belgians within his confines. But the system he had set on foot, of waging or promoting incessant wars among his neighbours, had at last entailed the inevitable penalty of rallying those neighbours to the State that promised tranquillity and security. There were none of them bold enough to attack Msiri and put an end to his intolerable tyranny and cruelty, but on the other hand they watched with interest and hope the progress of the effort to hoist the flag of the Congo State above the palisade of Msiri's palace. If such was the prevalent opinion among the chiefs, that of the people who contributed the victims of his wholesale butcheries was still more pronounced, and, while terror prevailed over hatred, their animosity was none the less intense because they were helpless.

Such was the situation when Stairs reached the capital of Msiri. He found that chief inflated by the weak adulation of the English missionaries, who pandered to his vanity, and also by his assumed success over Le

Marinel and Delcommune, who had not been able to force or cajole him into hoisting the blue banner with the golden star. He, however, pretended to be glad to see the English officer, and expressed the hope that he would help him to expel the State agent left behind by Le Marinel. While this view was uppermost, Msiri's attitude towards them was marked by cordiality. "This country is yours. You are my messenger (God). Do what you think best, only remain my friend." When, however, Msiri discovered that Stairs had come to effect the same object as the Belgian officers and to establish a control over his territory, he changed his tone. In one of the last of their interviews, Stairs upbraided him for his cruelty and butcheries, and told him that they would no longer be tolerated. At this, Msiri lost his temper and began to shout. Stairs shouted louder, and in a contest of lungs the English officer vanquished the African despot.

With this scene Msiri's hopes of having found an ally were dispelled, and he gave a point-blank refusal to Stairs' order to hoist the Congo flag. But he soon found that he had mistaken his man, for Stairs at once hoisted the flag with his own hand above the palisade of Msiri's residence. This act produced an immense impression among the natives, who regarded it as a signification of the coming end of the tyranny under which they had long suffered. Msiri himself saw that it would be fatal to the system he had established, and, sooner than give way, he fled from Bunkeia during the night following the resolute step of Captain Stairs, to Moemena. Here he assumed a defiant attitude, openly proclaiming his hostility to the Europeans, and taking steps to achieve his ends by their assassination.

When these rumours reached Stairs, he acted with characteristic energy. He sent his lieutenants Bodson and Bonchamps with a hundred men to bring Msiri to his presence—by force if necessary. The latter of the two

named has given the only eye-witness's account of what followed, and the following is a summary of his narrative : —The position Msiri occupied at Moemena, or Maiemba as it is also called, was strongly palisaded. When the small force was drawn up outside, the village chief came out and asked what they wanted. He was told they wished to talk to Msiri, and that no harm was intended to either the village or its inhabitants. On this the chief invited one of the officers to accompany him back to the village, and Lieutenant Bodson insisted on going. He left with



LIEUTENANT BODSON.

two black nyamparas or lieutenants and ten black soldiers, and he arranged with Bonchamps to attack at once on hearing a revolver shot.

When Bodson entered the village he was taken into the presence of Msiri, whom he found sitting in the centre of a band of chiefs. He at once delivered his message, summoning Msiri to accompany him back to Captain Stairs. Infuriated at this challenge before his own followers, Msiri

rose and drew his sword, which seems to have been an arranged signal, for at once a shot was fired at Bodson. Feeling himself wounded, the Belgian officer drew his revolver and shot Msiri through the heart. The firing then became general, and Bodson fell mortally wounded. On hearing the firing Bonchamps at once made his attack, and, after exchanging several volleys, forced his way into the village, where he found Bodson lying desperately wounded, and near him the dead body of Msiri. News of what had happened was sent to Stairs, who at once sent up Dr. Moloney and a reinforcement of men.

The wounded officer was conveyed on a hammock to the camp, but from the first his case was known to be hopeless. On seeing Stairs he exclaimed, "I am dying, but you will tell my countrymen that I have not died in vain. Thank God! For I have delivered this fine country of Africa from one of its most detestable tyrants." A few hours later he passed away, and the last words on his lips were "*Vive le Roi!*" In Lieutenant Bodson the Congo State had an energetic servant, and its sovereign a loyal officer.

The following tribute to Lieutenant Bodson from his commander and friend, Captain Stairs, destined to soon follow him on the long journey, deserves quotation:—"His deplorable death has deprived the expedition of a capable and energetic officer, of a faithful man, full of zeal for the accomplishment of his duty, and always ready to carry out all the instructions given to him. I became his friend, and I was able to appreciate his merit, and the way he devoted himself to the work to be done in Africa. He was certainly destined by his capacity to occupy a high place in the affairs of the Congo, if his death had not happened in such an untoward manner to cut short his career."

The death of Msiri produced an immense impression throughout the whole of the Katanga region. The chiefs whom he had incited to war made peace with each other; the races who had provided the material for his butcheries rejoiced, and those who were reduced to a condition of absolute or approximate slavery were released. Although the chiefs individually expressed their desire to recognise the control of the State and to hoist its flag, it was felt necessary to appoint a head chief, to whom the Government could look as responsible for the whole district. Under all the circumstances, Captain Stairs decided that Mukanda Vantu, son of Msiri, would be the best and safest man to fill the office. After he had given promises to conform to the new regulations prohibiting the

slave trade and human massacres, Mukanda Vantu was installed in power. He hoisted the blue flag, and as an emblem of authority Stairs gave him his own sword. At the same time Stairs began the construction of a strong fort at Bunkeia, which Dr. Moloney finished after his departure, and, as a symptom of the change that had been effected, it may be stated that the door of Msiri's palace was taken to construct a table for the fort mess.

Leaving Captain Bia, who had arrived from the Kassai in charge of the fort at Bunkeia, Captain Stairs set out on his return march, *via* Nyassa and the Zambesi, for the Indian Ocean. Unfortunately, a succession of mishaps befell the returning expedition. The territory traversed was desolated by famine, supplies were unobtainable, the sufferings of the men were past description, and Stairs himself fell a victim to the bilious fever, caused by want and suffering. The conquest of Katanga cost two valuable lives, and in Stairs it may perhaps be said, without injustice, that the Belgian officers would find an example, not of courage,—for that they do not need,—but of that prompt resolution in crushing a difficulty, which comes only from long use and inherited experience in the work of empire.

The overthrow of Msiri, effected by the Stairs column, was only one part of the task of pacifying Katanga. The work and progress of the two other columns may now be described. That under Delecommune left Gandu on the Lomami on 18th May 1891. Its strength consisted of three hundred and fifty men, and *en route* it was increased by some hundred additional porters. All went well with it until on the 30th of August it was encamped near Lake Kassali, a marshy expanse, through which passes the Lualaba. The main body had reached the borders of the lake, and was engaged in pitching its camp, when a servant rushed in and exclaimed that the rear guard had been surprised, and Lieutenant Hakansson had been

killed. The news was perfectly true, the officer and fourteen of his men having been surprised in the jungle, and slain with the long spears which the blacks hurled with extreme dexterity. Hakansson was a man of a fine nature. Only a few weeks before his death he had greatly distinguished himself in a fight with fifteen hundred adversaries, when, being left with only a few men to withstand their onset, his European companion, Dr. Briart, was wounded in the knee by an arrow: fearing lest it might be poisoned, Hakansson threw himself on the ground and sucked out the venom, under the heavy fire of the enemy, who were armed with rifles as well as bows. Having saved his companion's life, he resumed firing on the enemy with his repeating-rifle, and soon had the satisfaction of seeing the enemy retire from the contest. Hakansson was a gentleman of Sweden, a worthy representative of the country of Gustavus Adolphus and Charles the Twelfth. It was impossible to stop to exact revenge without compromising the success of the whole expedition, and consequently Delcommune resumed his march, passing through the mountainous Kibala region, whose beauties, he wrote, could defy the brush of any painter. He concludes a long description of the scenery of this region with the following passage:—"Seated on a rock of sandstone, eagerly scanning all around us, glancing in every quarter, we were astonished by this picture, which no pencil could render. None of the loudly vaunted beauties of Switzerland and the Pyrenees, where charming scenery nevertheless exists, could rival these lost corners of the Kibala Mountains, of which the whole effect, in its turn picturesque and savage, imposing and on a great scale, seemed softened and rendered pleasant by the brilliant equatorial vegetation in such striking contrast." After a hundred and forty-two marches, Delcommune reached Bunkeia some weeks in advance of Stairs, as already mentioned, but, after a brief stay there

and at the post on the Lufoi commanded by Lieutenant Legat, he left to explore the southern districts of Katanga watered by that river.

This portion of his work was accomplished under the most terrible sufferings from famine, due to the manner in which the whole region had been ravaged by Msiri and his imitators. M. Delcommune gives the following graphic account of what he and his men went through :—

“We took seven days in traversing this distance, and during these seven days we saw neither village nor cultivation nor game. Our food consisted exclusively of some mushrooms and a few berries. The expedition suffered during this march all that a caravan could suffer. The last of the donkeys was eaten. It was like a drop of water in the sea ; porters and soldiers fell, one after the other, never to rise again. It was a veritable funeral march, and the pathway of misfortune was marked out by the corpses of our faithful followers. Famine—against that terrible scourge no energy resists ; one must bend the back and leave the rest to die. It is terrible, more terrible than I should ever have imagined—I, who had the heart steeled against the emotions. What a difference—to see these same men fall in battle when the fusillade excites the ardour of each—an expression of regret for those who are gone, for the brave men dead on the field of honour, and we pass on. But to see them sink down on the sides of the path, with haggard eyes, holding their depressed stomachs and saying, ‘Master, I starve and am going to die,’—and when this scene is repeated fourteen and even fifteen times a day, we must have a heart of triple brass not to be tortured with pity at the sight of these poor creatures, who have followed us so faithfully, who have shared our sufferings and dangers, who fall and yet cannot be succoured. To save some, to be obliged to abandon others to their sad fate, to be forced to leave them there, a prey to the most frightful tortures until death—benefi-

cent this time—had accomplished his task—is there not in all this something to make us curse our fate?”

When Delcommune reached the Lualaba, he succeeded, after two and a half months' work, in building a sufficient number of boats to convey his expedition down the stream. As they were almost on the verge of starvation, the construction of this flotilla provided the only means of safety, and the feelings of this despairing and almost desperate body of men can be better imagined than described, when, after seven weeks' navigation under extraordinary difficulties, they were suddenly precluded from making any further progress by the immense Falls of Nzilo, where the river works its own course through a narrow gorge of nearly fifty miles in length. Delcommune had thus to abandon the boats he had so laboriously constructed, and to make his way overland to Bunkeia, which he reached on 8th June 1892. It is unnecessary to follow further the course of this enterprising pioneer of commerce; and perhaps the most durable result of the Delcommune Expedition was its clearly establishing the mineral wealth of Katanga, and especially its resources in copper.

There remains, in conclusion, to give briefly the history of the third column under Captain Bia. Without any mishap it made its way to Bunkeia, arriving after the departure of Stairs. Then Captain Bia assumed the chief control as the senior officer. His great struggle was with want. Msiri's system had reduced the country to such straits that there was no food. The stores had to be husbanded with the greatest care; many lives were lost, and it was not until the maize grew next year that the distress was relieved. Then illness attacked the whites, and only Bia and Francqui were in a fit state to undertake the exploration of the region round Lake Moero, on which they had decided. While on this journey Bia's own health broke down, and for days he had to be carried on a hammock. Still he prosecuted his task, even to the

placing at Kitambo Mwenge, the village where the event occurred, of the bronze commemoration tablet sent from the Royal Geographical Society, London : " David Livingstone died here, 1st May 1873." After visiting Bangweolo, some improvement became perceptible in Captain Bia's health, but on leaving the shores of that lake the expedition had to pass through a district ravaged by smallpox. In order to escape the ravages of the disease, double marches had to be made; and when they reached Ntenke, south of Bunkeia, Bia, thoroughly exhausted, was stricken by a fever from which he never recovered. His body is buried on the summit of a little hill overlooking the valley of the Lufila, the principal affluent, in its upper course, of the Lualaba. Captain Bia was another of the devoted men who have given their lives in the cause of civilisation and peace in Central Africa. The command then devolved on Lieutenant Francqui, who, after conducting several interesting explorations, returned to Gandu on hearing of the commencement of the campaign with the Arabs.

At Lusambo, Francqui and Delcommune rejoined hands and, returning together to Europe, received a cordial reception at the hands of their fellow-countrymen for the good work they had accomplished in the discovery and opening up of Katanga. A special medal was struck in honour of the absorption of that district. The geographical results of the three expeditions were scarcely less important in any sense than the political consequences of the death of Msiri and the overthrow of his power. They have been summed up by M. Du Fief, the secretary of the Belgian Geographical Society and a well-known cartographer :—

"The reconnaissance of the course of the Lomami for a further portion of its course of two hundred miles, of the Lake Kassali, of the Lufila from its confluence with the Djikuluwe to its source, and of the Upper Lualaba to the Falls of Nzilo; the entirely fresh examination of the

Lukuga, the overfall of Tanganyika, from Makalumbi to its confluence with the Lualaba, and of the Lualaba itself to its confluence with the Luapula. It has also established the nature of Lakes Bangweolo and Bemba, which form the Chambezi, or upper course of the Luapula. It has proved that the Congo has still a navigable section above Lake Moero, that the line of water-parting between the Congo and the Zambesi is a plateau with moderate slopes and no sharp declivity. Nearly three hundred unexplored miles of the Lualaba have been traversed, and the probability of the still unknown portion of that river to its confluence with the Luapula has become a matter of reasonable acceptance."

The establishment of the camps at Lusambo and Bena Kamba as part of the authorised programme of the State against the Arabs had led, in the first place, to the absorption of the extensive and promising province of Katanga, but the advance to the Lomami had also contributed in its way towards the hemming in of the Arabs on the west; and when the campaign with the Arabs has to be described, the consequences of this step will appear. But before entering upon that final phase in the struggle for the suppression of the slave trade, it is necessary to mark the progress of events in Europe, where several important passages in the history of the Congo State had been inscribed on the records of the time, and where diplomacy had been busily engaged in further marking out its destinies. Last, but not least, the King had proclaimed the object of his heart in what he had created, and had published to the world the legacy he bequeathed to his people.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SECOND BRUSSELS CONFERENCE AND THE KING'S WILL

THE task of elucidation and definition in respect to the mission of civilisation on the Congo, begun by the Brussels Geographical Conference in 1876, and carried on by the Berlin Conference in 1885, may be said to have been completed by the Anti-Slavery Conference held at Brussels in the years 1889-90. Reference has already been made to the growing indignation among the public of all the civilised nations at the still prevailing horrors of the slave trade in Central Africa. The encyclical letter of the Pope and the campaign of Cardinal Lavigerie had stirred men's minds, and created a general sentiment in favour of the summary repression of the Arab raiders who preyed on the defenceless black races. What communities think to-day must be reflected in the action of their Governments at no great interval. A subject that appealed so deeply to the sympathies and compassion of the fortunate peoples who live in a condition of freedom and security, as the brutal pursuit and senseless slaughter of the negro tribes, brought so clearly and repeatedly before them by a succession of travellers in the Dark Continent, could not fail to arouse and sustain that volume of public opinion which was necessary to stimulate the action of cabinets, and to set in motion the machinery of diplomacy.

During the year 1888 the Parliament of Great Britain and the German Reichstag passed motions on the subject

of the suppression of the slave trade; and in September of that year the British Government suggested, through the Belgian Foreign Department, that the King should take the initiative in assembling a Conference at Brussels on the subject. On the 24th August 1889 His Majesty, deferring to this wish, and rightly concluding that all the circumstances were favourable to a unanimous and practical result, issued an invitation to the Powers to assemble in conference at his capital, for the purpose of discussing the best means for obtaining the *gradual* suppression of the slave chase (*la traite*) on the African Continent, and the *immediate* closing of the exterior markets supplied from that source. This invitation was accepted by all the Powers which had been represented at the Berlin Conference, and, in addition, Persia also sent a representative.

The Conference was to formulate its own programme, the King contenting himself with the expression of a general wish that its labours would result in the drafting of a common code on the subject, by which all the Powers would be equally bound. The Prince de Chimay, Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, presided at the formal inaugural meeting on 18th November 1889, at which the Conference unanimously elected Baron de Lambermont to preside over its deliberations. This tribute to the eminent Belgian statesman was merited by the general work he had performed in regard to the African question, and by his special labours in drafting the General Act of Berlin. In Brussels, as at Berlin, M. Emile Banning was associated with him as representative of Belgium, while the Congo State was represented with equal ability by M. (now Baron) Van Eetvelde, whose long connection with the State and energetic promotion of its true interests will claim the reader's special notice when the administration of the great undertaking is described in a later chapter.

Among other prominent representatives may be mentioned Lord Vivian and Sir John Kirk for Great Britain,

Mr. Terrel, Minister at Brussels, for the United States, Prince Ourroussof and Professor Martens for Russia, M. Bourée for France, and Herr von Alvensleben for Germany. The Conference continued in session from November 1889 until 2nd July 1890, the date on which its General Act was signed. In the deliberations and decisions resulting from them, the Belgian representatives took a more prominent and a more confident part than at Berlin. There the fate of their undertaking was decided. Here had to be done a great civilising work, with regard to which the Congo State had to perform the most responsible and onerous duties, and the Belgian spokesmen very properly and naturally took the first place in the proceedings. The Belgian Government placed before the Conference the project for an Act, and the labours of the Assembly were practically confined to the modifications and additions needed to secure unanimous approbation for this able State paper, which was the joint production of Baron Lambermont and M. Emile Banning.

After seven months' deliberation the Conference made the following Declaration :—

“The Powers, reunited in conference at Brussels, which ratified the General Act of Berlin of 26th February 1885, and which adhered to it:

“After having drawn up and signed together in the General Act of to-day's date a certain number of measures destined to put an end to the slave chase of negroes on land as well as on sea, and to ameliorate the moral and material conditions of life among the indigenous populations :

“Considering that the execution of the arrangements which they have decreed with this view impose on some of them, who have possessions or exercise protectorates in the conventional basin of the Congo—obligations which render it imperative for them to acquire new resources if they are to discharge them :

“Have agreed to make the following Declaration :—

“The signatory or adhering Powers which have possessions or exercise protectorates in the said conventional basin of the Congo, may, so far as any authorisation is necessary for that purpose, impose on imported merchandise dues of which the tariff shall not exceed an equivalent of ten per cent. on the value at the port of importation, with the exception altogether of spirits, which shall be regulated by the terms of chapter VI. of the General Act of this day.

“After the signature of the said General Act, a negotiation shall be opened between the Powers who have ratified the Berlin General Act, or who have adhered to it, with the object of fixing at the maximum limit of ten per cent. on value the conditions of the Customs régime to be instituted in the conventional basin of the Congo.

“It is none the less understood—

“1. That no differential treatment nor right of transit shall be established.

“2. That, in the application of the Customs service that shall be agreed upon, each Power will seek to simplify as much as possible the formalities and to facilitate the operations of commerce.

“3. That the arrangement resulting from the aforesaid negotiation shall remain in vigour during fifteen years from the signature of the present Declaration. At the expiration of that term, and in default of a new agreement, the contracting Powers will find themselves in the condition foreseen by article IV. of the Berlin General Act, the right to impose a maximum of ten per cent. on merchandise imported into the Congo basin being reserved to them.

“The ratifications of the present Declaration will be exchanged at the same time as those of the General Act of the same day.

“In faith of which the Plenipotentiaries have drawn up the present Declaration, and have attached their seals.

“Done at Brussels the second July 1890.”

The following summary of the General Act of the Brussels Conference, referred to in the preceding Declaration, will suffice for the general reader. The first article, relating to the most efficacious means of combating the slave chase in the interior of Africa, was divided into seven sections. The first provided for the progressive organisation of administrative, judicial, religious, and military services—in fact, the whole machinery of government; and the manner in which the Congo State has organised and created them will be narrated further on. The second remedy was to be the gradual establishment in the interior of strong protective and repressive stations. The third clause provided for the construction of roads and railroads, so that human portage might be ended. The fourth, for the placing of steamers on the lakes and inland waters. The fifth, for the laying down of telegraph lines. And the sixth, for the organisation of expeditions by movable columns. While these clauses were of an active character, the seventh came under the head of prohibition. It provided for the restriction in the import of firearms, and especially of modern rifles and ammunition, within the whole extent of the territory affected by the slave trade. The General Act only provided for the restriction in the import of firearms; but the King, in the administrative decree applying its provisions to the Congo State, interdicted the importation, traffic, and transport of all rifles, as well as of powder, bullets, and cartridges. The same decree placed impediments in the way of the importation of any kind of arms, and imposed severe penalties on those who in any way broke these regulations.

The second article of the Act laid down that “the stations and the interior cruisers shall have for their object the prevention of the capture of slaves, and the

interception of the routes of transit. They shall extend their efficacious protection over all the dependent populations within the range of their authority, by prohibiting intestine war, and by initiating them into agricultural labour. They will assist commerce, verifying labour contracts; they will aid the missions, and they will organise a sanitary service." The realisation of these views was a matter that devolved upon the administrators of the State. On the other hand, the third and fourth articles referred to the attitude of the Powers, who engaged themselves to help, so far as they could, every effort made against slavery. The fifth article placed all engaged in the slave trade outside the general law, and provided for their arrest in the possessions of any of the signatory Powers. A subsequent article referred to the assistance a slave could claim; and these regulations were to remain in force for twelve years, after which they should be renewable at intervals of two years.

The second chapter referred to the caravan routes and the transport of slaves by land. The only interesting provision in this part of the Act was that liberated slaves were to be provided with the means of livelihood, and also with that of education. Passing over the intermediate chapters, the sixth chapter enumerated in six articles the measures to be taken for the restriction of the trade in spirituous liquors. These measures were not free from qualifications and limitations, that certainly affected their operation in benefiting the people, as, for instance, the commencing statement: "The importation of distilled drinks is forbidden in the regions where they have not yet penetrated," and, "Each Power will determine for itself the limit of this zone within its own possessions." Where they had obtained the right of entry, the States concerned undertook to impose a duty of fifteen francs per hectolitre of alcohol of 50 centigrades, which in English is not the equal of a shilling a gallon. The question of the

spirit traffic in the interior of Africa must be reserved for future consideration ; it is enough here to note that the members of the Conference appreciated the evils that might ensue therefrom, and that they did what they could to avert the decadence and ruin of emancipated Africa through its passing under a different and not less terrible thralldom.

With regard to the direct influence of the resolutions of the Anti-Slavery Conference at Brussels on the fate of the Congo State, this was more perceptible in the accompanying Declaration than in the General Act. The Berlin Conference had placed a heavy responsibility on the King, and that at Brussels added to it. In order to render it possible for the Sovereign of the Congo State to accept it, he had to be provided with the necessary resources, and the means of obtaining them. As one of the representatives of the Congo said, "The progress realised since the meeting of the Berlin Conference, that is to say, in five years, has surpassed all hopes. The State is resolved to apply in all their rigour the clauses of the Act which you are about to sign ; but the cost will be immense, and without import duties, without the revenues the State expects from them, we cannot associate ourselves efficaciously with the carrying out of your work." The reply to this natural statement was the conferring of the right to impose duties up to ten per cent., given by the accompanying Declaration already cited.

All the Powers eventually ratified the Brussels Act in its entirety, with the exception of France. Holland hesitated to take the step, because it was largely interested in the spirit trade ; but the Queen Regent generously intervened, and, thanks to her example, the Dutch Chambers sanctioned the ratification. The United States also hesitated to ratify, but eventually came round to the views of the majority. France gave her adhesion, with the important reserve that she "would not recognise the

articles relating to the zone of maritime search, jurisprudence, arrest, seizure and condemnation of suspected ships." The French flag consequently flies alone off the East Coast of Africa for the benefit and protection of the dealers in slaves, who, as a matter of fact, are still employed in the French possessions of the Indian Ocean.

With regard to the work accomplished by the Conference, no opinion could be more valuable or convincing than that of Baron Lambertmont, who had been its guiding spirit. "None of us thought that the Conference was going to put an end at once, and without having to wait any longer, to the odious traffic in slaves. Such a task is not one of those that is accomplished in a day. We have marked out the plan that the Government will follow, and traced the plan of action that seems to us the wisest and most efficacious to pursue. In reality, the treaty will only be valuable as it is applied, and the success will be in proportion to the perseverance and energy which the Powers bring to the execution of the measures we have indicated to them. The generous breeze of public opinion will second their efforts, and hasten the realisation of the noble object pursued by the Conference."

The conclusion of the Conference was followed by two important matters bearing on the relations between the Congo State and Belgium. The timidity of Belgian opinion in incurring any direct responsibility in Central Africa has already been referred to, and up to this point all that had been done in the Congo State had been accomplished without the least aid from the Government or people of the country mainly interested in its success. But the conferring of the right to impose import duties guaranteed at some future date the receipt of an adequate revenue to provide the security for a loan, and under such conditions it was proper and reasonable to ask the Belgian Chamber to make an advance to assist the State in the discharge of its task, until the development of trade and the

natural resources of the country had been carried to a much further point. The following convention was accordingly concluded between M. Beernaert, the Finance Minister (now President of the Belgian Chamber, and the most prominent Parliamentary authority in his country), and the present Baron Van Eetvelde. It is dated the 3rd July 1890, or the day after the signature of the Act of the Conference :—

“ Between the Belgian State, represented by M. A. Beernaert, Minister of Finance, acting under the reserve of the approbation of the Legislature, and the Independent State of the Congo, represented by M. E. Van Eetvelde, Administrator-General of the Department of Foreign Affairs, authorised to this effect by the King-Sovereign, this the following Convention is agreed upon :—

“ 1. The Belgian State engages to advance, by way of loan, to the Independent State of the Congo the sum of twenty-five million francs, in the following manner : Five million francs immediately after the approbation of the Legislature, and two million francs a year during ten years, commencing from this first instalment. During these ten years the sums thus lent shall not bear any interest.

“ 2. Six months after the expiration of the said term of ten years the Belgian State shall be able, if it judge good, to annex the Independent State of the Congo, with all the possessions, rights, and advantages attached to the sovereignty of that State, such as they have been recognised and fixed, notably by the General Act of Berlin of 26th February 1885, and by the General Act and Declaration of Brussels of 2nd July 1890, but also on condition of assuming the responsibilities of the said State towards third parties—the King-Sovereign expressly refusing all indemnity on account of the personal sacrifices he had himself made. A law will regulate the special régime under which the territories of the Congo State shall then be placed.

“ 3. From the present time the Belgian State will receive from the Independent State of the Congo such information as it judges desirable, on the economical, commercial, and financial situation of the latter. It may specially ask for communication of the budgets of receipts and expenses, and of the customs dues both on imports and exports. This information is to be given, with the sole object of enlightening the Belgian Government, and the latter will not in any way interfere in the administration of the Independent State of the Congo, which will continue to be attached to Belgium only by the personal union of the two crowns. Nevertheless, the Congo State engages not to contract any new loan hereafter, without the assent of the Belgian Government.

“ 4. If at the fixed time Belgium decides not to accept the annexation of the Congo State, the sum of twenty-five million francs lent, inscribed in the ledger of its debt, would not become demandable until after a fresh period of ten years, but it should bear in the interval an interest at the rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., payable every six months, and even before this term the Independent State of the Congo should devote to partial repayments all the sums obtained from cessions of land or the mines of the domain.”

This convention was important from two points of view. It was, in the first place, to provide the State with the sum of £200,000 down, and an assured annual income for ten years of £80,000. It was still more important when regarded from the other point of view, of placing the Congo State at the disposal of Belgium. The Belgian people were given by this instrument the generous period of ten and a half years for reflection over this matter. They have still until the second month of the year 1901 to say what they will do. But King Leopold made it clear in this document that for himself he had no personal object to serve in inviting his country

to take over, if it desired, what he had obtained for it in realising a great and noble object, and in placing himself in the forefront of a great cause. The second clause contains the formal statement that the King-Sovereign expressly refuses all indemnity on account of the personal sacrifices he had himself made. These sacrifices were represented by the bulk of His Majesty's private fortune, or a sum of one and a half million sterling. That simple fact should silence the detractor and the malignant, who recognise no motives save those of self-interest.

There is, however, clearer evidence on the subject than that contained in the convention just quoted. The convention was submitted to the Belgian Chambers on 9th July 1890, and at the same time the two following documents were read. It will be noted that they were both dated in August 1889, three months before the Brussels Conference began its session.

5th August 1889.

"DEAR MINISTER (M. BEERNAERT),—I have never ceased to call the attention of my countrymen to the necessity of extending their view to countries beyond the sea.

"History teaches that States of limited size have a moral and material interest in stretching beyond their narrow frontiers. Greece founded on the shores of the Mediterranean opulent cities, centres of art and civilisation. Venice, later on, established its greatness on the development of its maritime and commercial relations not less than on its political successes. Holland possesses in the Indies thirty millions of subjects, who exchange the commodities of the tropics for the productions of the mother country.

"It is by serving the cause of humanity and progress that people of the second rank appear as useful members of the great family of nations. More than any other, a manufacturing and commercial nation like ours

should strive to secure outlets for all its workers, for those of thought, capital, and labour.

“These patriotic preoccupations have dominated my life. They determined the creation of the African work.

“My labours have not been sterile. A young and vast State, directed from Brussels, has peacefully taken its place under the sun, thanks to the benevolent aid of the Powers which have applauded its beginning. Belgians administer it, whilst others of our countrymen, every day more numerous, employ there with profit their capital.

“The immense river basin of the Upper Congo opens to our efforts ways of rapid and cheap communication, which permit us to penetrate direct into the centre of the African Continent. The construction of the railway of the region of the Cataracts henceforth assured, thanks to the recent vote of the Legislature, will notably increase these facilities of access. Under these conditions, a great future is reserved for the Congo, the immense value of which will soon be apparent to every eye.

“On the morrow of this considerable act, I have thought it my duty to place Belgium herself, when death shall have struck me, in a position to profit by my work, as well as by the labour of those who have aided me in founding and directing it, and whom I thank here once more. I have therefore made, as Sovereign of the Independent State of the Congo, the Will that I send you. I ask you to communicate it to the Legislative Chamber at the moment which shall appear to you the most opportune.

“The beginnings of enterprises such as those which have so much occupied me are difficult and onerous. I have held myself bound to support the cost. A king, in order to serve his country, ought not to fear to conceive and to pursue the realisation of a work, even if it be apparently rash. The wealth of a sovereign consists in

public prosperity : it alone can constitute in his eyes an enviable treasure, which he should endeavour constantly to increase.

“To the day of my death I shall continue, in the same desire of national interest which has hitherto guided me, to direct and sustain our African work ; but if, without waiting this term, it should be agreeable to the country to establish closer links with my possessions on the Congo. I should not hesitate to place them at its disposal. I should be happy to see it, during my lifetime, in the full enjoyment of their possession. Allow me, in the meanwhile, to say to you how grateful I am towards the Chambers, as well as towards the Government, for the aid that they have afforded me on several occasions in that creation. I do not think I deceive myself by affirming that Belgium will derive important advantages from it, and that she will see opening before her, on a new continent, happy and larger prospects.— Believe me, dear Minister, your very devoted and very affectionate

LEOPOLD.”

The King’s will, as Sovereign of the Congo State, accompanying this noble letter, was to this effect :—

“ We, Leopold II., King of the Belgians, Sovereign of the Independent State of the Congo :

“ Wishing to assure to Our well-beloved country the fruits of the work which for many years We have pursued on the African Continent, with the generous and devoted co-operation of many Belgians :

“ Convinced of thus contributing to assure for Belgium, if she wishes it, the outlets indispensable for her commerce and her industry, and to open new paths for the activity of her children :

“ Declare by these presents, that We bequeath and transmit, after Our death, to Belgium all our sovereign rights over the Independent State of the Congo, as they are recognised by the Declarations, Conventions. and

Treaties concluded since 1884 between the foreign Powers on the one side, the International Association of the Congo and the Independent State of the Congo on the other, as well as all the benefits, rights, and advantages attached to that sovereignty.

“Whilst waiting for the Belgian Legislature to pronounce its acceptance of Our aforesaid disposition, the sovereignty will be exercised collectively by the Council of the three administrations of the Independent State of the Congo, and by the Governor-General.

“LEOPOLD.

“Done at Brussels the 2nd of August 1889.”

On the 9th July 1890, six days after the signature of the convention between the representatives of the Belgian Government and the Congo State, M. Beernaert communicated the letter and will of the King to the Chamber, at the same time depositing a *Projet de Loi* for the ratification of the convention. After a brief debate, the Belgian Chamber of Representatives passed a vote in favour of the convention on 25th July 1890, and five days later the Senate also ratified the arrangement by unanimity. For the moment, however, nothing was done in response to the notification of the King's will, placing at the disposal of his country the great colony he had founded in Central Africa. The announcement was received with applause, the nobility and disinterestedness of the step commanded general approbation and admiration, and the sound sense of the country rallied to the view that Belgium had secured, by the wisdom of her ruler, an opportunity which it would be folly to neglect, and a prize that might well excite the envy of more numerous and securely placed peoples. At this stage it is unnecessary to dilate on the subject. The fact need only be recorded, that in July 1890 the King placed the Congo State as a free gift in the hands of the Belgian people, and that at this moment eight years have expired out of

the little more than ten, secured them by the convention for the privilege of taking it over, without their being able to arrive at a decision. Apart from this right under the convention, the King's will bequeaths to his country the great colony he has created, and, although it cannot be doubted that a decision will be arrived at long before, there is the certain conclusion that Belgium can only lose the Congo by an absolute repudiation that would make her name a by-word among the nations, and of which no one can doubt that her people would be incapable.

CHAPTER IX

THE ARAB CAMPAIGN

THE operations that have been described on the Aruwimi and the Lomami were the preliminary to the serious struggle with the Arab power that was inevitable. The Conference at Brussels defined with greater precision the object to be attained, and also in its outcome supplied the sinews of war for its attainment. But local occurrences precipitated the collision; and the Arabs, alarmed for their own safety by what had taken place on the Uelle and the Lualaba, resorted to the offensive, and thus contributed to the speediness of their own overthrow. The collision was inevitable, but the Arabs themselves decreed that it should take place as early as 1892, and that it should be on a decisive scale. They were led to this by the perception that the advance of the Belgians had closed the door to their razzias, and that their hold on the Arabised negro chiefs would soon disappear, unless by some military success they could recover the region from which they had been ousted. There was yet another motive at the root of their policy. The Congo State, within its own perfect right, had at the end of 1891 imposed a tax on ivory, and consequently the Arabs were obliged, even in regard to the trade which they were allowed to carry on, to pay a tax to the Europeans. It is possible, perhaps, that among all their motives this was the grievance they felt most keenly.

In addition to the expeditions already described, a

purely commercial adventure on the part of the Belgian Society of the Upper Congo had about this time begun operations on the Lomami, and its representative, M. Hodister, had founded two stations on the latter river. The operations of this company were regarded by the responsible authorities of the State as too venturesome, and in excess of what the situation justified, for no actual collision had yet occurred with the Arabs. The Belgian officer in command in this region, Lieutenant Le Marinel, had issued a prohibition to the agents of this company to go beyond a certain zone, and this had led to exaggerated statements in Europe to the effect that the State would or could not protect or promote trade. A practical answer was soon given to these strictures on the spot, by the massacre of the Hodister Expedition. In a letter of 23rd March 1892, Hodister speaks of his magnificent reception by the Arabs, and on the 6th May he was still full of hope, and described the relations with the Arabs as excellent. On that day he left Bena Kamba for Riba Riba on the Congo, which he reached on the 15th of the same month. The Arabs met him outside the place, and murdered him and his companions. The factories of the company were attacked, and their inmates killed. Eleven Belgians in all were slain, and the massacre of these white men on the Upper Lomami was described to the world as "the greatest of all disasters in Central Africa."

This tragic event was not the only indication of the sentiment and plans of the Arabs. When the Belgian authorities asked Rashid, who had succeeded his uncle Tippu Tip in the government of Stanley Falls, to co-operate with them in securing punishment for the murders on the Lomami, he categorically refused, and immediately afterwards Sefu, Tippu Tip's son, arrived to collect his father's debts and realise his property, which was rightly construed as signifying an intention to sanction an open rupture. In the meantime relations with the Arabised

negro chief, Gongo Lutete, had gone through a new phase. The command of the camp at Lusambo had been handed over to Lieutenant Francis Dhanis by Paul Le Marinel, and this officer had already attracted favourable notice by his energy on the Aruwimi in founding the camp at Basoko. He was soon afforded an opportunity of showing that he possessed it, for he was little more than installed at Lusambo when news arrived that Gongo Lutete had again taken the field, and was endeavouring to force a passage across the Sankuru.

Dhanis, with admirable resolution, at once assumed the offensive; and in three separate engagements, fought in the months of April and May, he defeated Gongo's forces and killed several of his chief lieutenants. These encounters were fought on 23rd April, 5th and 9th May. In the last and most critical of these fights the black auxiliaries of Dhanis, dismayed at the sight of the dense masses of the Arabs, broke and fled. The Arabs then advanced, shouting "Do not fire; these are Wachenzis (natives or savages), make them prisoners and chain them." They were received by a terrible fire, which speedily undeceived them, and before which they fled panic-stricken. At the close of the campaign Gongo Lutete made his submission, and requested to be allowed to rank himself among the allies and vassals of the Congo State. After some hesitation, with the view of testing the sincerity of his overtures, the most influential of the negro allies of the Arabs was admitted into terms of friendship. Gongo Lutete placed a considerable con-



BARON DHANIS.

tingent in the field to assist the Belgians, and a new post was founded at Gandu on the Lomami, considerably above the last station of Bena Kamba, and well advanced on the last route to Nyangwe and Kassongo. The region between the Sankuru and the Lomami was tranquillised by these measures.

While this success was scored by the State, the Arabs had not been inactive on their side. Sefu, on his return from Stanley Falls, had seized the station at Kassongo, where two Belgian officers, Lieutenants Lippens and De Bruyn, were made prisoners. With the object of using them as hostages for the purpose of negotiation, their lives were for the time spared. Sefu then raised all the forces he could; and Munie Moharra, the principal chief of Manyema, whose reputation for courage and wisdom placed him at the head of the Arab leaders, combined with him to the full extent of his power. In fact, the Arab league might be described as complete.

Having made up their mind to appeal to the sword, the Arabs lost no time in taking the field, and Lieutenant Dhanis soon learnt that they were advancing in great force from their base at Nyangwe and Kassongo towards the Lomami. At the same time they went through the form of stating the terms on which they would make peace. These were, the surrender of Gongo Lutete and the other chiefs who had abandoned their side, and the fixing of the frontier where they wished. These proposals, even if the State had not on its side resolved to crush the Arab power, would not have been acceptable; but they justify the following description of Gongo Lutete, taken from Dr. Sidney Hinde's book, *The Fall of the Congo Arabs*:—

“Gongo Lutete was by blood a Bakussu. He had himself been a slave, having as a child fallen into the hands of the Arabs. While still a youth, as a reward for his distinguished conduct and pluck on raiding expedi-

tions, he was given his freedom. Starting with one gun at eighteen years of age, he gradually collected a band of brigands round him, whom he ruled with a rod of iron, and before long became Tippo Tip's chief slave and ivory hunter. . . . At the time of his adhesion to the State, Gongo was perhaps thirty years of age. He was a well-built intelligent-looking man of about five feet nine inches in height, with a brown skin, large brown eyes with very long lashes, a small mouth with thin lips, and a straight, comparatively narrow nose. His hands were his most remarkable characteristic; they were curiously supple, with long narrow fingers, which when outstretched had always the top joint slightly turned back. One or both hands were in constant movement, opening and shutting restlessly, especially when he was under any strong influence. His features meanwhile remained absolutely immovable. One had to see this man on the warpath to realise the different aspects of his character. The calm haughty chief, or the genial and friendly companion, became on the battlefield an enthusiastic individual with a highly nervous organisation, who hissed out his orders one after another without a moment's hesitation. He was capable of sustaining intense fatigue, and would lead his warriors through the country at a run for hours together."

The co-operation of this chief signified the addition of several thousand fighting men of a kind to the forces which Dhanis was able to array on the Lomami against the Arab invasion. He had also three hundred and fifty regulars and one Krupp 7.5 gun, while six or seven Europeans formed his staff. To one of them, Captain Michaux, with Lieutenant Duchesne as second in command, he entrusted a separate operation in conjunction with Gongo's own levies. With this latter force rested the honour of the first encounter with the Arabs, who succeeded in crossing the river Lomami somewhat below the point where they were expected. Here they came into collision with

Michaux and Gongo Lutete at a place called Chige. The Arabs were estimated to number six thousand armed with muskets, and ten thousand more with bows and spears. A heavy storm came on soon after the first contact, and Gongo reported that his men could not fight because "the guns were wet." Michaux at once comprehended that the Arabs were in the same case, and ordered the attack. After a brief struggle the Arabs were seized with panic, and dashed into the river which they had crossed. They were killed by hundreds, and, when the result of this victory was counted up, it was found that six hundred Arabs had perished on the field, twice as many more in the river, and that a thousand prisoners remained in the hands of the victors, besides a large number of guns and much ammunition. The battle of Chige, which formed such a promising opening for the Arab campaign, was fought on the 23rd of November 1892.

A few days before it was fought, the following striking and pathetic incident had occurred on the banks of the Lomami. The capture of De Bruyn and Lippens at Kassongo has been mentioned, and Sefu brought them with him, in the idea of utilising their services as interpreters. He sent the former to the banks of the Lomami to explain the terms on which he would make peace. The river was at this point a hundred yards across, and, while the points were being discussed and placed on paper, Dr. Hinde begged the Belgian officer to make an attempt to escape. "Can you swim?" he called out to him, and on receiving an affirmative reply he placed his best marksmen in positions to cover the attempt, saying, "Each of you select your man, and leave me the chief." Then he turned again to De Bruyn and shouted, "I have marksmen in the grass; jump into the river, and I can save you." A complete and awful silence followed. Then came across the river the words, "No, thank you! I cannot abandon Lippens." A very fine and heroic

answer, which would be creditable to the officers of any army, and furnishes another instance of the devotion and loyalty with which many of the Belgian army have discharged their duty and met their fate in Central Africa. A few days later, De Bruyn and Lippens shared the same death at the hands of the Arab Sefu, who also killed a man named Mabrouki because he had endeavoured to save them.

Three days after the battle of Chige, Dhanis crossed the Lomami with the intention of carrying the war into the territory subject to the Arabs. His advance guard was commanded by Lieutenant Scherlink and Dr. Hinde, while the column under Michaux crossed the river lower down and operated along a northern route. With the latter marched Gongo Lutete; and the two columns, after receiving the surrender of several negro chiefs *en route*, combined at Lusuna, sixty miles south-west of Nyangwe and eighty west of Kassongo. The united force numbered six white officers, four hundred regulars, and twenty-five thousand black auxiliaries under their chiefs. The size of the contingents was a source of weakness rather than strength, and, when one of the principal chiefs expressed a fear of proceeding farther, Dhanis seized the excuse to send many of them back to their homes. After arriving at Lusuna, news came that Sefu, with Munie Moharra, was advancing from the Congo to attack; and orders were accordingly sent to Delcommune and Francqui, news of whose safe return from Katanga had just arrived, to hasten with such force as they might possess to the point of danger.

On 30th December the second battle of the campaign was fought. Gongo's men were first engaged, and were soon put to flight by the Arabs. The arrival of the regular forces restored the day, and, while Dhanis attacked them in front, Michaux made a flank attack. The engagement was rendered more arduous by the passage of a

swamp, in which the men fought up to their necks in water. Gongo rallied his contingent, and the arrival of the Krupp decided the day. The Arabs fled with a loss of two hundred men, while the State forces lost eighty-two killed and wounded, the greater number of whom were among Gongo's men. The capture of their camp, where it



A CONGOLESE SOLDIER.

was found that before retreating the Arabs had killed their own women, was the prize of the victory. After crossing the deep and rapid Mwadi, the force established a camp on the Gois Kapopa plateau, where a week's halt was called to enable supplies and reinforcements to come up from Gandu. While in this position news arrived that

Sefu, at the head of an immense force, had again taken the field, and that Delcommune had sent as many men as he could under Lieutenant Cassart to join the commander.

While on the march, and at a comparatively short distance from the camp, the column under Lieutenant Cassart was attacked. This officer had twenty-six soldiers, two hundred and fifty of Gongo's men, and was bringing about fifty thousand cartridges. He was attacked before six in the morning, on 9th January 1893, by Moharra in person. He managed to repulse the enemy, and to make his way into camp with a loss of one man killed and six wounded, but with his stores intact except for the five thousand cartridges he had used during the engagement. On hearing the firing in his rear, and learning that a white man was in danger, Dhanis had sent out a part of his force under Lieutenant de Wouters, who, although he failed to join Cassart, came into contact with Moharra's force and won a considerable success—due, however, in a great degree to Moharra's men assuming that his force was an Arab contingent from Sefu coming to their aid. The State troops were able to reserve their fire till within twenty yards of the Arabs; and Moharra, who was carried in front of his men by his wives, owing to his having been wounded in the first engagement with Cassart, was killed in the first volley. The defeat and death of Moharra was a rude blow to the Arab cause; and the first intimation Sefu received of the loss of his ally was when Gongo's scouts came into contact with his and informed them that they had "eaten Moharra a few days before."

This intelligence proved so disconcerting to Sefu that he abandoned his strong camp on the Kipango when he learnt that that river and the Lufubu had been bridged by Dhanis. Dr. Hinde considered it fortunate that Sefu thus lost heart, for he described the Arab camp as occupying "a plateau about a mile and a half square, surrounded on every side by nearly perpendicular grassy

slopes," and practically impregnable. Sefu was unnerved by the loss of a favourite wife and by the death of Moharra. He suffered no loss during his retreat, as pursuit was delayed by the breaking of a bridge, and the consequent loss of many lives among Gongo's contingent. The Arabs then retired behind the Lualaba on Nyangwe, and on 21st January Dhanis arrived within sight of that place, from which, however, he was separated by the broad course of the river, at this point more than half a mile wide. A camp was then pitched on the one dry spot discoverable, amid the grassy swamp on the side of the river, and during five weeks a daily rifle duel was engaged in between the opponents. As Dhanis had no means of crossing the river, this contest might have been indefinitely prolonged.

The Arabs had naturally carried all the canoes across the river with them, and the only chance of obtaining any was through the mediation of the Wagenia, the peculiar riverain tribe to which all the boats belonged. But they were not to be won over in this respect, although quite willing to play the part of spy for both sides. Towards the end of the period named, they brought news that provisions were getting short in Nyangwe, which suggested a ruse to Dhanis. He sent Sefu, by them, a present of six fowls—the last in his camp—with a message to the effect that he had plenty, but when these were exhausted he would cross over the river. The ruse succeeded, for, some days later, tidings came that the Arabs had crossed over to the western side of the river, and were building bomas, or forts, some distance below the camp of the State forces. The news, as being too good to be true, was at first doubted, but confirmation was speedily obtained of its truth, and the Belgian commander at once marched out to attack them in two columns. A serious engagement—but one difficult to describe, owing to the confusion caused by the impossibility of following the opposing movements in the



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long grass—ensued with the Arabs in the forest outside their bomas. The result of the battle was the complete defeat of the Arabs with a loss of nine hundred men, many of whom perished in the attempt to recross the river. This success brought round the Wagenias to the side of the State, and the necessary canoes for the passage of the Lualaba were towed up the stream to the camp, under the fire of the Arabs. In this way one hundred canoes were collected for the conveyance of the expedition across the Upper Congo, and, one hour afterwards, Nyangwe was in its possession, with scarcely any attempt at defence. Sefu had retired to Kassongo, the second Arab position on the river.

Reference having been made to the bomas, or Arab forts, it will be useful to describe what they were like, at this stage. Dr. Hinde writes : “An Arab force on the march employs a large number of its slaves in cutting down and carrying with them trees and saplings, from about twelve to fifteen feet in length and up to six feet in diameter. As soon as a halting-place has been fixed on, the slaves plant this timber in a circle of about fifty yards in diameter, inside which the chiefs and officers establish themselves. A trench is then dug, and the earth thrown up against the palisades, in which banana stalks, pointing in different directions, are laid. Round the centre, and following the inequalities of the ground, a second line of stakes is planted, this second circle being perhaps three or four hundred yards in diameter. Another trench is then dug in the same way, with bananas planted as before in the earthwork. The interval between the two lines of fortifications is occupied by the troops. If the boma is only to be occupied for two or three days, this is all that is usually done to it; but if it is intended for a longer stay, a trench is dug outside the palisades. The object of using banana stalks in this way is ingenious. Within four or five hours they shrink, and on being withdrawn from

the earth leave loopholes, through which the defenders can fire without exposing themselves. Little huts are built all over the interior of the fort, and these huts are also very ingeniously devised, and are, furthermore, bomb-proof. They consist of a hole dug a yard and a half deep, and covered with wood. This wood forms a ceiling, over which the earth from the interior is placed to the depth of a couple of feet, and a thatched roof placed over all to keep off the rain. In many of the bomas we found that the defenders had dug holes from the main trenches outwards, in which they lived, having lined them with straw. The whole fort is often divided into four or more sections by a palisade and trenches, so that, if one part of it is stormed, the storming party finds itself in a cross fire—a worse position than when actually trying to effect an entrance. We found that the shells from the 7.5 Krupps did little or no damage to these forts.”

Nyangwe was occupied on 4th March 1893, but, in consequence of an attempt some days later to surprise the force, Dhanis found it necessary to destroy the greater part of the town by fire. After this the expedition suffered frightfully from the ravages of influenza and smallpox. In April, however, Dhanis was reinforced by five hundred men, under Commandant Gillain and Lieutenant Doorme, and on the 18th of the month, leaving Nyangwe in the charge of De Wouters, he marched on Kassongo. The force at his disposal numbered only three hundred regulars and two thousand auxiliaries, while the Arabs at Kassongo were computed to number sixty thousand, with fifty modern rifles, and holding four strong bomas. The attack took place on the 22nd of the month, and, owing to a piece of good luck, Doorme succeeded in at once capturing by a rush the fort at the end of the town, which threatened the Arab rear,—with the usual consequences that their confidence was shaken. As Dhanis and his lieutenants never gave them a moment's time to

recover, the whole place was carried in an hour and a half, Kassongo was the capital of the Arab power, and contained all their stores and wealth. It was far superior as a place of residence to Nyangwe, and the spoil proved immense. On arrival here, confirmation was obtained of the murder of Emin Pasha in the previous February.

The interest of the campaign now turns to Stanley Falls, where Rashid, another of the Arab confederates,



STANLEY FALLS.

and Sefu's cousin, had preserved nominally friendly terms with the State authorities. Evidence was found at Kassongo of his direct complicity with the other chiefs, which was, moreover, a matter that was never seriously in doubt. The Resident for the State at Stanley Falls was M. Tobback. He had one European colleague, Lieutenant Van Lindt, and a small force to defend the Residency. Although there were rumours, during the whole period of

the operations described, that the Arabs had determined to kill all the Europeans there, it was not until the 13th of May, or after the news of the fall of Kassongo had been received, that Rashid attempted to put these threats into execution. For five days a desperate struggle continued. In the first day's action the garrison lost three killed and seven wounded, the assailants seventy or eighty killed and wounded; on each of the four subsequent days the loss was not less, and Tobback saw himself compelled to make arrangements for evacuating the station. Six large canoes were prepared for this purpose, when the opportune arrival of Commandant Chaltin saved the situation. The Arabs were in their turn attacked. After a series of engagements all their positions were taken, fifteen hundred prisoners were made, and Rashid barely escaped with his life. In this manner was brought to an end, on 18th May 1893, the Arab interregnum which had been set up at Stanley Falls, as described, after the withdrawal of Dubois and Deane in 1884. Less than ten years had sufficed to establish the power of the State on a firm basis, and to enable it not merely to dispense with the alliance of the Arabs, but to destroy their capacity for evil.

Up to this point the progress of the campaign had been for the forces of the State one of undimmed success; and when Captain Ponthier made his way up the Congo with reinforcements for Dhanis, in June, it seemed as if the Arab campaign might be regarded as at an end. Sefu himself thought so, for he fled across Tanganyika into German territory. A sudden change of fortune now took place, due in some degree to the blunder of a Belgian officer, who precipitately came to the rash and baseless conclusion that Gongo Lutete was a traitor, and summarily ordered him to be tried by court-martial, and then shot. Gongo Lutete was a staunch and useful ally, and his death was very regrettable. This mistake was followed by the tidings of the arrival of Rumaliza, chief of

Ujiji, east of Tanganyika with a fresh force of Arabs, with which he announced his intention of reconquering Man-yema. He pitched his camp at Kabambari, half-way between Kassongo and the lake. In October 1893, Dhanis, accompanied by Ponthier and five other officers, four hundred regulars, and three hundred auxiliaries, marched to the attack of Kabambari. The Krupp gun, that had done much useful service at Nyangwe and Kassongo, was also taken, but unfortunately there was little ammunition



KASSONGO.

left. Half the regular troops were Haussas ; the other half consisted of the negro tribes—Balubas, Bena Malele, and Batetelas.

The Arabs were found strongly placed in two well-built forts at Mwana Mkwanga, where they offered a determined and successful resistance. The troops failed to rush the boma, the blacks abandoned the Krupp, which had to be worked by the European officers ; one of the officers, De Lange, was seriously wounded, and the Belgian commander had to call off his men. A camp was then

established in a secure position, and, when the Arabs attempted to storm it, they were in turn easily repulsed. At this critical moment Dhanis ordered up reinforcements from Kassongo, but, owing to his orders being misunderstood, that place was left without a garrison. The Arabs, hearing of this error, attempted to turn it to account, by making a flank movement to recover this place; but, fortunately, De Wouters, to whom the chief entrusted the task, succeeded in outstripping them in a march, night and day, with a tornado raging all the time, and then in driving them back. De Wouters was one of the heroes of this struggle. Of gigantic figure—six feet five inches in height, and always clothed in white from head to foot—this valiant officer was ever in the front of the battle. His energy was equal to his courage, and the forced march that averted the fall of Kassongo was only one proof of his vigour and dash.

While De Wouters held a position north-east of that of the main force, skirmishes were fought almost daily. These culminated in a desperate attack on the Belgian camp, made by the Arabs during a fog. The assailants succeeded in effecting an entrance into the camp, and hand-to-hand fighting ensued. In this Captain Ponthier received a mortal wound, dying a few days later, and fifty men were killed or wounded. After a struggle of five hours, Dhanis succeeded not merely in repulsing the Arabs, but in pursuing them up to the entrance of Rumaliza's forts. The Arabs themselves suffered so heavily, including a great chief named Mohamedi, that they gradually retired. The irregulars pursued them, capturing much ammunition. Dhanis then returned to Kassongo, to reorganise his force and to summon reinforcements, while he left De Wouters in active command at the front.

De Wouters determined to pursue the retreating Arabs, and came up with them at the boma of Lubukine,

which he attacked. In the assault Lieutenant De Heusch, whom Dr. Hinde describes as "the most reckless of dare-devils," was killed, whereupon his men fled. His body was saved from the enemy by the courage of a black sergeant named Albert Frees, and De Wouters succeeded in repulsing a sortie, and making good his retirement, with the loss of four men killed, besides De Heusch, and ten wounded. On this occasion the Arabs also lost heavily—among others the chief Sefu, Tippo Tip's son, who had returned from German territory. After this there was a lull of some weeks, but on the 24th December Dhanis again found himself in a position to assume the offensive, thanks to the reinforcements he had received. There was the greater necessity to do this, as the report of the advance of Rashid with the Arab forces, rallied after the capture of Stanley Falls, to the aid of Rumaliza, was discovered to be well based.

The force was divided into two columns. Gillain, with one hundred and eighty soldiers and two hundred auxiliaries, was sent with one column to cut off Rumaliza's retreat. De Wouters, with two hundred and fifty soldiers and four hundred auxiliaries, was ordered to Bena Kalunga, close to Rumaliza's large boma. Dhanis commanded a reserve body, with two Krupp guns. A premature attack on the fort failed, and the situation was aggravated by the news that a considerable body of fresh levies was hastening to the aid of Rumaliza from Tanganyika. These were intercepted, and compelled to retire, by a force detached for the purpose. This enabled the State forces to practically surround the two bomas of Rumaliza, and in this way to achieve a success that the rifle and gun fire altogether failed to attain. The bomas were practically impregnable, as the Krupps failed to break the palisades. Things looked black when all the outer line of posts declared that they had no more troops to send Dhanis; but the fortunate and unexpected arrival

of Commandant Lothaire and three hundred men, on 9th January 1894, revived the hopes of success. At that moment, too, the Belgians had a stroke of luck. A shell from the Krupp blew up the Arab magazine and set fire to the fort. The thatch burnt freely, and the defenders were obliged to abandon it. Most of them were shot down, or drowned in an attempt to cross the river. After this the other bomas were invested more closely, and, when their water supply was cut off, the Arab position became desperate. In three days the other garrisons were compelled to surrender by thirst, and over two thousand Arabs became prisoners.

Rumaliza succeeded in escaping, but by a prompt pursuit the Belgian commander entered and captured Kabambari without loss. De Wouters then marched on to Lake Tanganyika, and effected a junction there with the force of the Anti-Slavery Society, which had, however, taken no active part in the campaign. Several of the principal Arab chiefs were secured, including Rashid, and those who escaped had little reputation, and less power, left. It is unnecessary to dwell on the minor measures adopted to pacify the whole of the region between the Lualaba and Tanganyika. It will suffice to say that they were completely successful, and carried out without loss. Unfortunately, these successes were dimmed by the death of the gallant De Wouters d'Oplinter, who, having escaped the fire of the enemy's bullets, succumbed to an abscess of the liver, brought on by the hardships of the campaign.

The successful issue of the arduous campaign must be attributed exclusively to the merit of the commander, Dhanis. He showed himself a daring and dashing leader, as well as a man of prudence. Some of the simple arrangements he made in preparing for the campaign contributed as much to its success as the larger operations of war. Among them, not the least important was his allowing

his black soldiers to take with them their women and children, which prevented them straying or molesting the people of the country through which they passed. Another regulation he made was to the effect that each officer might take with him as many boys—native servants—as he liked ; and these not only attended to all the wants of their master, but became a sort of bodyguard for him. Lastly, he warned his officers beforehand, that all who went with him must understand they took the risks of the campaign, as he intended to regard every missing officer as dead, and not to allow any consideration to interfere with the main object of his operations, which was the overthrow of the Arab power.

The Belgian commander summed up the results of the Arab campaign of 1892-94 in the following words :—

“ The Arab campaign has had as a result the delivering into the hands of the State agents of the greater number of the Arabs who participated in the massacre of the Europeans at Kassongo, Riba Riba, and of the Hodister Expedition, as well as in the murder of Emin Pasha. The guilty have been handed over to justice, and condemned by councils of war conformably to the laws of the State ; others died during the fighting, and very few, in any case, have escaped. The annihilation of the Arab power has thus had, as a consequence, the complete ending of the action of those devastating bands which, for the purpose of procuring slaves for their organisers, ravaged the country, put all to fire and sword, and had already advanced to the Uelle on the north and the Sankuru on the south. With them disappears from the territory they exploited the slave trade, and very soon, it may be hoped, this will exist no longer in the State of the Congo.

“ The native chiefs who had submitted to them have been replaced in their authority ; others who disappeared have been replaced by intelligent soldiers of the State ; and lastly, certain Arabs who have made their submission

have been left undisturbed in their possessions. All have been disarmed, and warned that they hold their authority under the direction of the agents of the State, who are charged with the settlement of any differences that may rise between them.

“Under the State’s direction the natives have resumed their cultivation, and by degrees this will be developed. Their attention has been specially directed to cultivation of produce, by which vast plantations of coffee ought to be created. The raising of cattle will also be the object of all their care, and very soon the Manyema will have again become the finest country of Central Africa.

“Large camps will be formed at Kassongo and Kabambari; numerous soldiers will be instructed there, and will form in a few years the nucleus of a national army.

“From this point of view, the Arab campaign has shown that the natives of the different regions of the Congo yield in nothing, as soldiers, to the blacks of the coast, the most renowned for their bravery. The Balubas and other natives trained and commanded by Lieutenant Doorme, and the Bangalas of Commandant Lothaire, were admirable. The latter only took part in the closing scenes of the campaign, and showed themselves good soldiers, brave, intelligent, disciplined, and very inured to fatigue. In his report Commander Lothaire praises them greatly.

“We may foresee in the near future the time when it will no longer be necessary to recruit, at great cost, foreign soldiers. The country itself will largely furnish its own needs, and Manyema, from the military point of view, will have a great importance, both from the number of men it can supply, and their special aptitude to the profession of arms.”

For this highly creditable military success Commandant Dhanis was ennobled by the King with the rank of Baron in October 1893, and on his return to Europe, at the end of 1894, he received a tremendous popular reception. At

the end of the next year he went out again as a Vice-Governor-General, and in that capacity more will be heard of him. Whatever may be said of his administrative skill, or of the wisdom of some of his later measures, no one can deny that his overthrow of the Congo Arabs was the most remarkable feat of war ever accomplished in Central Africa. He proved himself the skilful lieutenant and the courageous soldier wanted by the King for the realisation of his own great project of being the executor of the resolutions passed by all the Conferences of Europe. Those assemblies would have long remained nothing more than the scene on which was displayed the depth of the existing sympathy for the enslaved races of the Dark Continent, and their work would have been represented by nothing more than some brilliant speeches and eloquent addresses, had not the King of the Belgians been thoroughly in earnest and strained his power to achieve a practical result. The credit of the successful campaign was largely due to him in its execution as well as in its inception. It was he who laid down the clear and skilful plan of driving the Arabs behind the Aruwimi on the one side, and the Lomami on the other. He also decreed that the second and more important phase of the campaign should be the attack on the Arab position on the Lualaba, so that the slave chiefs should be wedged in between that river and Tanganyika, and taken in the rear by the forces on the lake.

It is no exaggeration, therefore, to say that the plan of campaign successfully carried out by the lieutenants named in this and the preceding chapter was really drawn up in Brussels by King Leopold. The still higher claim to fame must be allowed to that sovereign, that he never slackened in his efforts to discharge the duties of the post which he occupied because all his rights were at last recognised. He might have temporised with the Arabs. They could have paid him out of their ill-gotten gains a far

higher revenue than he could hope to secure for many years after their downfall. He could have averted the expenditure of still more of his private fortune. He would not have had to strain, by the loss of many gallant fellow-countrymen, the faith of his subjects in the merit of his work and the value of the Congo State. In plain words, King Leopold had done enough to justify his wearing the double crown, and to excuse his leaving to some successor the task of fulfilling the demands of civilisation in its war with the slave trade. Had he done this he would have had the example of his neighbours to justify, or at least excuse, his conduct. What has France done to end the slave trade? What has Germany done? King Leopold saw his opportunity. He not only indicated the way to a decisive victory, but he won it, and history will not deny him the recognition to which he is entitled.

CHAPTER X

THE LATER DIPLOMATIC ARRANGEMENTS

THERE remain to be described in the history of the Congo State two important diplomatic arrangements, which may be said to have invested with completeness the boundaries of the great territory formed in Central Africa. These arrangements were concluded on a basis of practical interest alone, and related to the political position and the right of possession held by the State in certain important directions. Whereas the Congo State had demarcated its frontier with Portugal, and obtained an indication, with sufficient clearness, of its boundary with Germany, no similarly adequate agreement had been arrived at with either of its other neighbours, Great Britain and France; and there still remained a certain vagueness about parts of the common frontiers, which threatened peril for the future. The progress of geographical knowledge had also complicated the situation by investing old names with new significance, and by showing, in certain cases, that they were no longer applicable. In the debatable quarters, when the State was contiguous to territory over which its neighbours had not acquired any rights, the situation had to be interpreted by the light of the accepted principles of international law, and especially by the right of effective possession, as well as by the bare definitions of boundary lines contained in the various treaties concluded by the respective Governments.

Negotiations consequently ensued on these points between the Government of the Independent State on the one side, and the Governments of Great Britain and France on the other. In point of date the convention with Great Britain was concluded first; but that with France covered so much more time in arrangement, and was attended by so many difficulties, that it is entitled to the first notice. Moreover, the political consequences of the Franco-Congolese Convention were far more pregnant with important issues in a region of Africa destined to occupy much attention in regard to future international rivalry, than those ensuing from the friendly agreement, more easily and rapidly effected on the borders of British South Africa.

The relations subsisting at the moment when the question of the upper course of the Ubangi became a matter of vital importance between France and the Congo State, were defined by two separate agreements, which have in their proper places been passed in review. These were the convention of 5th February 1885, by which France, as some return for the right of pre-emption conferred on her in 1884, agreed to determine the respective limits of the possessions of the Republic and the State, and also to guarantee its neutrality. The second convention, of 29th April 1887, was the first rectification of the frontier after the Conference. It resulted, after long negotiations and an abortive attempt at arbitration, in the surrender of much territory to France, by the substitution of the Ubangi to the 17th degree of east longitude for the boundary defined in the third article of the treaty of 5th February 1885, and the modification of the right of pre-emption in favour of Belgium. The difference of view that arose in the year 1891, and that was not settled until the year 1894, had special reference to the last of these conventions and to the course of the Ubangi.

The last of the two conventions, viz. that of 1887, stipulated that "from its confluence with the Congo the thalweg of the Ubangi will form the frontier as far as the 4th parallel of north latitude. The Independent State of the Congo engages, *vis à vis* of the Government of the French Republic, not to exercise any political influence on the right bank of the Ubangi north of the 4th parallel. The Government of the French Republic engages, on its side, not to exercise any political influence on the left bank of the Ubangi north of the same parallel, the thalweg forming, in both cases, the line of separation. In any case, the frontier of the Congo State will not fall below the 4th parallel north, the limit which is already recognised for it by the third article of the convention of the 5th February 1885."

A difficulty was imported into the question, and a cause of dissatisfaction, from the French point of view, established, when the discovery was made, following on to that of the connecting of the Uelle with the Ubangi, that the Ubangi had still another and more northern upper course in the Mbomu. The contention of the French was that the Uelle was the true upper course of the Ubangi, and that the State had no rights north of it, even although it would result in the carrying of the frontier line south of the 4th parallel secured to it by the convention of February 1885. Those rights had also been established by effective occupation, not only on the Mbomu, which geographers soon accepted as the true upper course of the Ubangi, but north of it, particularly in Semio's territory and the dependencies of the other Niam Niam chiefs, where no European flag had ever flown. Such being the case, the Belgians very naturally insisted that the convention of 1887 applied only to the main course of the Ubangi, and that above the confluence of the Uelle and the Mbomu the right of possession should be established by the well-known doctrine

of international law, termed effective occupation. The French view was equally positive as to the letter of the convention being in favour of their case. At last the principle of arbitration was invoked in pursuance of the twelfth article of the Berlin Act, which provided for such reference in the event of any serious difficulties arising, and the Congo State made proposals to the French Government for the adoption of this pacific and legal mode of removing the difficulties that had arisen. Although a more favourable opinion was beginning to spring up in France towards the Congo State and its work, the French Government declined to have recourse to arbitration.

Negotiations were, however, commenced in 1891 on the subject, and were completely abandoned until, on 14th August 1894, they resulted in a convention, signed at Paris by M. Hanotaux, and the representatives of Belgium and the Congo State, appointed plenipotentiaries for the purpose. This convention contained six articles, of which the last two were formal, and need not be quoted. The first article conceded a part of the Belgian claim, by constituting the Mbomu the upper course of the Ubangi. It reads as follows:—

“Article 1. The frontier between the Independent State of the Congo and the colony of the French Congo, after following the thalweg of the Ubangi to the confluence of the Mbomu and the Uelle, shall be formed in the following manner:—First, the thalweg of Mbomu to its source; second, a straight line joining the crest of the water-parting between the basins of the Congo and the Nile. From this point the frontier of the Independent State is constituted by the said crest of the water-parting to as far as its intersection with the 30th degree of east longitude (Greenwich).”

The second article so far qualified the exclusive rights of the State on the Mbomu as to give France facilities in

the pursuit of criminals, and in the maintenance of its own communications on the right bank. Its terms will sufficiently explain the qualifications under these heads.

“Article 2. It is understood that France will exercise, under conditions which shall be determined by a special arrangement, the right of police on the course of the Mbomu, with the right of pursuit on the left bank. This right of police will not be exercisable on the left bank, but exclusively along the course of the river, and so long as pursuit by the French agents is indispensable to effect the arrest of the authors of offences committed on French territory or on the waters of the river. France shall have, when necessary, a right of passage on the left bank, to assure her communications along the course of the river.”

The third article provided for the gradual surrender to French representatives of the various posts established by the State north of the Uelle; and the fourth and last of the articles “bound the State to renounce all political action of any kind to the west or north of the following line—the 30th degree of east longitude, from its point of intersection with the crest of the water-parting of the basins of the Congo and the Nile, to as far as the point where this meridian meets the parallel $5^{\circ} 30'$, and thence that parallel to the Nile.”

In this case, as in the preceding discussions and conventions with France, the State lost something that it absolutely possessed; but the same wise political insight which led the King of the Belgians to give up Niadi Kuiliu, on which such large sums had been expended, and to resign his legitimate claim to the 17th degree of east longitude as boundary, induced His Majesty to waive his right of possession north of the Mbomu. It is permissible to believe that the King has not gone altogether without reward in this matter, and that since the conclusion of the last convention, in 1894, a better feeling has sprung up in France towards the Congo State, and a more just appre-

ciation of the splendid work it has accomplished in Central Africa. It would be strange, indeed, if it were not so, for the affinity of language and race between the Belgians and French guarantees a mutual consideration and a community of action that should remove all possibility of collision on the Congo, the Ubangi, and the Mbomu. So far as formal agreements and signed documents can avert causes of strife, the arrangement between the Congo State and France may now be regarded as complete. A clear and well-defined boundary has been laid down from the Atlantic to the Nile; all causes of difference have been removed, and there undoubtedly exists an increasing sympathy between the representatives of the two States in the heart of Africa. At that prospect no one has a right to take umbrage, as the harmony thus established conduces to the success of the great civilising work to which all Europe appended its signature.

The convention between Great Britain and the Congo State did not arise out of any such acute differences as those described between France and her neighbour. It was caused rather by a wise and timely arrangement to dispose of a certain part of the old possessions of Egypt, in anticipation of their recovery by the overthrow of the Dervishes. The text of this convention, dated the 12th day of May 1894, and negotiated by the Baron Van Eetvelde and Sir Francis Plunkett, British Minister at Brussels, may be left to speak for itself. Omitting the introductory and concluding clauses, it reads as follows:—

“His Majesty the King of the Belgians, Sovereign of the Independent State of the Congo, having recognised the sphere of British influence as it was determined in the Anglo-German arrangement of 1st July 1890, Great Britain engages to give on lease to His Majesty certain territories situated in the western basin of the Nile, on the conditions specified in the following articles:—

“Article 1. A. It is agreed that the sphere of influ-

ence of the Independent State of the Congo shall be limited to the north of the German sphere in East Africa by a frontier following the 30th meridian east of Greenwich, to as far as its intersection with the crest of the water-parting between the Nile and the Congo, and that crest of the parting in the north and north-west directions.

“B. The frontier between the Independent State of the Congo and the British sphere north of the Zambesi will follow a direct line from the extremity of Cape Akalunga on Lake Tanganyika, situated on the most northern point of Cameron Bay (about $8^{\circ} 15'$ south latitude), to the right bank of the river Luapula, at the point where that river issues from Lake Moero. The line will then be prolonged direct to the entrance of that river into the lake; towards the south of the lake, however, it will deviate sufficiently to leave the island of Kilwa to Great Britain. Then it will follow the thalweg of the Luapula to as far as the point where that river emerges from Lake Bangweolo. It will then follow in a southern direction the meridian of longitude passing by this point to as far as the crest of the water-parting between the Congo and the Zambesi, then that crest to the Portuguese frontier.

“Article 2. Great Britain leases to His Majesty King Leopold the Second, Sovereign of the Independent State of the Congo, the territories hereafter stated to be occupied and administered by Him, on the conditions and for the period of time hereafter stipulated. These territories will be limited by a line drawn from a point situated on the western bank of Lake Albert immediately south of Mahagi, to the nearest point of the frontier defined in paragraph A of the preceding article. This line will then follow the crest of the water-parting of the Congo and the Nile to the 25th meridian east of Greenwich, and this meridian to as far as its point of intersection with the 10th parallel north latitude; thence it will follow this parallel direct to a point to be determined north of

Fashoda. It will then follow the thalweg of the Nile in a southern direction to as far as Lake Albert, and the western bank of that lake to the point above indicated south of Mahagi.

“This lease shall remain in vigour during the reign of His Majesty King Leopold the Second, Sovereign of the Independent State of the Congo.

“At the expiration of the reign of His Majesty it shall, however, remain in full force so far as it concerns all the part of the above-mentioned territories situated west of the 30th meridian east of Greenwich, as well as to a band twenty-five kilometres broad, to be determined by mutual agreement, extending from the crest of the water-parting of the Nile and the Congo, to as far as the western zone of Lake Albert, and comprising Port Mahagi.

“This extended lease shall remain in force as long as the territories of the Congo shall remain, as an independent State or a Belgian colony, under the sovereignty of His Majesty and of the successors of His Majesty.

“During the whole continuance of the present lease a special flag shall be used in the territories so leased.

“Article 3. The Independent State of the Congo leases to great Britain, to be administered, when she shall occupy it, under the conditions and for the period hereafter determined, a strip of territory twenty-five kilometres broad, extending from the most northern post on Lake Tanganyika, which post is comprised in the strip, to as far as the most southern point of Lake Albert Edward.

“This lease shall have the same duration as that which applies to the territories situated west of 30th meridian east of Greenwich.

“Article 4. His Majesty King Leopold II., Sovereign of the Independent State of the Congo, acknowledges that he has not, and that he does not seek to acquire, any other political rights in the territories leased to him in the

basin of the Nile than those in conformity with the present arrangement.

“In the same manner, Great Britain acknowledges that she has not, and that she does not seek to acquire, any other political rights in the strip of territory leased to her between Lakes Tanganyika and Albert Edward than those in conformity with the present arrangement.

“Article 5. The Independent State of the Congo authorises the construction across its territories by Great Britain, or by a company duly authorised by the English Government, of a telegraphic line, connecting the English territories of South Africa with the sphere of English influence on the Nile. The Government of the Congo State shall have all facilities to connect this line with its own telegraphic system.

“This authorisation does not confer either on Great Britain, or any company, person, or persons delegated with a view to constructing the line, any rights of police or administration in the territory of the Congo State.

“Article 6. In the territories leased by the present arrangement, natives of each of the contracting parties shall enjoy reciprocally the rights and immunities of the natives of the other, and shall not be subjected to any differential treatment.”

The publication of this convention was received with emphatic protestations on the part of the Governments of France and Germany. The former protested against the surrender to the Congo State of the whole of the former Egyptian province of Bahr Gazelle, which was the practical meaning of the boundaries ceded of longitude 25° east and latitude 10° north to Fashoda. The latter protested against the clause as to the twenty-five kilometre strip of territory on the eastern borders. The protest of France was the more energetic and the more important, because at the moment France and the Congo Government were in active negotiations on the subject of the Mbomu. The

interval between May and August 1894, or, in other words, between the dates of the two conventions cited, was employed in establishing a basis of agreement between France and the Congo State. It was discovered in the direction of a further surrender by the King to the demands of France; and as His Majesty had paid his neighbour in some form or other for any concession it had made to him as Sovereign of the Independent State, so had he now to secure its admission of his rights on the Mbomu and on the Nile, by surrendering the greater part of the territory leased to him in the Bahr Gazelle by Great Britain. The clause of the convention with Great Britain giving the Congo State the territory to the 25th meridian east of Greenwich, and this meridian to as far as its point of intersection with the 10th parallel of north latitude, and thence eastwards to the Nile north of Fashoda, was attenuated by the fourth article of that with France into "the 30th degree of east longitude from its point of intersection with the crest of the water-parting of the basins of the Congo and the Nile to as far as the point where this meridian meets the parallel $5^{\circ} 30'$, and thence that parallel to the Nile." The King thus lost the greater part of the Bahr Gazelle and $4\frac{1}{2}$ degrees of the Nile that had been ceded to him by Great Britain, but he also pacified the French Government and French opinion. He secured a workable frontier on the Mbomu, and a sufficiently clear one eastwards to the Nile. Above all, he retained the position he had obtained on the Nile. It is true, Lado and not Fashoda became his most northern possession, but the grand aim of the King's policy in obtaining a foothold on the Nile was secured. With the same far-sighted intelligence which had characterised all his measures, King Leopold saw that the question of the Nile would form in the future the turning-point in the question of the political and commercial situation in Africa. He is the possessor of the magnificent water-way of the Congo—he controls, in whole or in

part, all its affluents ; and on the Nile he has now secured a right-of-way for his flag, which at no distant date will be esteemed not the least valuable of the many rights he secured for his people in the interior of Africa.

The subject of the Anglo-Congolese Convention of May 1894 cannot be dismissed with expressions that refer exclusively to its importance from the sole point of view of what it was prudent and possible for the Independent State to retain. It was, it must be remembered, an agreement between the Government of Great Britain and the Congo State, by which the former gave the latter rights in a region to which it claimed that no one else had any pretensions. The ink on that agreement was scarcely dry when France protested against its terms, and, as Great Britain did not stand up to maintain its own handiwork, there was no choice for the King but to make the most satisfactory arrangement within his power and resources. He did so with his usual admirable address. But the question between England and France remains over. The reconquest of the Soudan for Egypt has begun. Before these lines are printed Omdurman will have fallen, and the Khalifa's power will be shattered into the myriad fragments out of which a little fanaticism—aided by the unsurpassed blunders of the English Government and, to be just, the English people—allowed it to be created. It will then be necessary to reassert the authority of the Khedive over the old dependent provinces of Khartoum. Is it conceivable that a principle of attenuation in that authority will be admitted because for fourteen or fifteen years the Khedive's authority has been in abeyance ? Are we going to cede to France the abrogation of a right of reconquest which she would be the first to protest against and to deny ? Yet Alsace and Lorraine are no more essential to the security of Paris than the Bahr Gazelle is to the mastery of the Upper Nile, and no toleration can be given to the doctrine that the political errors of the Gladstone Govern-

ment in 1883-4, and the bad strategy of Lord Wolseley in 1884-5, have alienated and detached that province from the Anglo-Egyptian hegemony. The fate of the Bahr Gazelle, so far as the complete security of the Nile route is involved, appertains to Egypt and Great Britain after the resuscitation of the Soudan; and Mr. Curzon echoed this sentiment in his official reply to Sir Thomas M'Kenna in May 1897, when he said, "The Egyptian Government has renounced none of its pretensions on the territories of the basin of the Upper Nile." It can only be satisfactorily arranged by an actual Anglo-Egyptian occupation, or by Great Britain placing the province in the safe hands of the Independent State of the Congo, as was done by the convention of May 1894.

CHAPTER XI

THE EXTINCTION OF THE SLAVE TRADE

BEFORE passing on to describe the operations which resulted in the practical acquisition of the portion of the Bahr Gazelle, left to the State by the last convention with France, it will be well to pause awhile and record the arrangements and regulations which resulted in the extinction of the slave trade, if only because that exploit constitutes the great claim of the Congo Government to fame. So far as the subject was affected by military measures, enough has been said in the record already given of the Arab campaign, and the crowning portion of the work will be disclosed when Chaltin placed the blue flag with the golden star above Lado, and formed a barrier in the path of the Dervishes to the south.

The story of how this success was obtained is set forth in four masterly reports, written between the years 1889 and 1897, by the Baron Van Eetvelde, the Secretary of State for the Independent State of the Congo, and it is due to this able Minister to say that not only has he described the measures with admirable lucidity, but that he defined them with the acumen of a true statesman. It will be evident from an examination of the facts, that the wise administrative measures passed in Brussels had as much to do with the complete success attained as the series of military successes won over Tippo Tip's lieutenants and relations.

At the time that the King was decreeing the con-

struction of the camps of observation on the Lomami and the Aruwimi, as the preliminary to active measures, the legislation of the State was already clearly defined on the subject of the slave trade and the protection of the blacks. The juridical and administrative sides of the problem had been carefully and thoroughly examined, the provisions to be enforced had been laid down with a firm hand, and as the zone of authority expanded, the system to be introduced was in readiness for application. That system was based on the terms of the Berlin Act, supplemented by the appropriate sections of the penal and civil codes of Belgium. The result was the introduction of the most enlightened principles of civilisation into the midst of a population to whom the ideas of personal liberty and abstract justice were totally strange.

The very first point of the penal code was, that slavery, even domestic slavery—the form of servitude with which General Gordon in the Soudan found it difficult, or rather impossible, to deal summarily—was outside the law. On the Congo it was laid down from the first that no man could be subjected to another, and all who contributed in any degree to the traffic, detention, or conveyance of any man at the bidding of another, were rendered equally amenable to the law. The rôle of the State was not to be passive in these matters. The judges, and indeed all functionaries of the State, were bound to assist and render protection to every man in maintaining or procuring his liberty. A slave had only to say that he was kept in servitude, to obtain the support of the whole administration.

It was not difficult to make these lofty declarations, but it was far more difficult to give them practical effect. The blacks were regarded in the eyes of the law as minors, and it became necessary, above all things, to protect them against employers, who could easily make the terms of engaging labour such as constituted a veiled

servitude. Here the State stepped in to protect the weaker party, and to assert unknown principles of equity among a race accustomed to violence and the denial of justice. With the view of ensuring that no evasion of the law should take place, it was decreed that all contracts for the employment of labour among the blacks, whether natives of the State or immigrants to it, should be drawn up in writing; but as this would necessarily be in the form arranged by the master, the document only acquired legal validity after it had received the visé of the Belgian authority. This official interposition served to establish two things: first, that the labourer was a free agent, and secondly, that he clearly understood the terms and conditions under which he was engaged. There was another element of danger or loophole for the evasion of the law in the removal of labourers or servants from one district to another, and therefore it was provided that, before anyone could be so moved, the nearest official should be satisfied of the willingness of the said person to be so removed, before issuing the necessary passport. In cases where no written contract was drawn up, the master was placed in a position of disadvantage in the eyes of the law, and preference was always given to the version of facts set forth by the employed. The utmost length for which a contract could endure was for seven years, and then the co-operation of the State was essential for its renewal. The master was also debarred from paying in kind unless the contract specially provided for it, and the State officers set their face against it because it opened the door to arbitrary and uncertain payments. Even local custom, to which when the labourer was pleading his case the greatest weight was attached, was not allowed to have any force when advanced in support of the master's representations. There is only one more condition to which attention need be drawn, and that is, that the employer, on removing a labourer from his dis-

trict, was bound to undertake the charge of his return at the termination of his contract.

These excellent and comprehensive arrangements seemed to meet every side of the case, but there remained a doubt as to how far they were carried out, or as to whether better arrangements might not be discovered; and, with the view of ascertaining the truth, Baron Van Eetvelde specially instructed the Director of Justice on the Congo to inquire into the matter, and report to him on the subject. After a careful examination, the Director reported in the following terms:—

“I do not discover any illicit acts attaching, either directly or indirectly, to the slave trade in blacks or to the transport of slaves which escape the knowledge of our tribunals. The state of slavery, even in the milder form of domestic servitude, which it often assumes among the native populations, having no existence in the eyes of our legislation, it results, in fact, that no one can be detained or retained against his will, whatever be the means employed. But does there exist, under the pretext of obligations freely contracted, a slavery more or less mitigated?

“Permit me to enter here into some expansion of the subject, and to endeavour to show the notions the blacks have of their existence, and of the extent of their rights. There is singularly great misconception if our black labourers are represented as unconscious beings, passively docile, and not protesting against tyranny. The usages in vogue show this sufficiently. In all the Lower Congo, the black, when he engages for service, demands a *moukande*. The *moukande* is the instrument which contains the literal proof of the contract which has just been concluded, or which sets forth any right or obligation whatever. It mentions the scale of salary, defines the service to be rendered, and the length of the contract. The use of the *moukande* is very extended and very

frequent. Once in possession of his *moukande*, the black is reassured. He knows that all the obligations contracted towards him will be faithfully observed; so he does not always hasten to exact the stipulated payment. He preserves his writing about him, to realise its value when he shall want it. Should any disaccord arise as to the execution of the clauses of the contract, or if he thinks himself wronged, the black hastens to the judge and pleads his case until he has obtained satisfaction.

“Generally, the black does not engage his services for a lengthy period. As soon as he has by means of his labour collected a little sum of money, he returns to his village, where, if he does not establish himself, he will joyfully spend the fruit of his savings among his own in order to thereafter contract a new engagement.

“These customs of the blacks being granted, their extreme love of law-suits (*palabres*), in the course of which they often reveal veritable talent as pleaders, and give proof of great tenacity in their pretensions, is another cause of their readiness for litigation. If, moreover, allowance is made for the very short extent of their engagements (six months, or at most a year), it is difficult to conceive that it is possible to reduce them, under the pretext of freely accepted obligations, to a slavery more or less mitigated, for it is only under the form of contracts for a long term or for an indefinite term that slavery can be established.

“Moreover, the particulars that I have collected permit me to affirm that in all the factories established on our territory from Banana to Ango Ango, Matadi, and beyond, the blacks look closely to the observance of the clauses of their *moukande*. They know that they have the right to engage their services as they intend, and that they cannot be retained beyond the time fixed by mutual agreement with the master. As to respect for their rights, it is guaranteed not only by the tutelar intervention of the

judicial authorities, but still more by the interests themselves of commerce. I will cite on this point a very characteristic fact. I am happy to have the opportunity of making it known, for it shows that the blacks are far from resembling the inert being without resource or energy that many persons represent them to be.

“A European employé of a mercantile house at Boma, having committed some months ago a sufficiently grave assault on a black labourer, was brought, on his complaint, before the criminal tribunal, which pronounced a severe sentence. This employé was also forthwith dismissed, because the inhabitants of the village to which the victim belonged, not content with the punishment pronounced, threatened to place in quarantine the factory to which the guilty employé was attached, and to carry elsewhere their produce.

“All that precedes relates more particularly to the customs of the natives of the Lower Congo, but beside the native labourers are numerous blacks from all parts of the African coast, Sierra Leone (English), the Republic of Liberia, etc. etc. They are employed in our stations and in the commercial houses, in the quality of carpenters, smiths, etc. etc. All these people from the West Coast of Africa, where for long years, thanks to the English influence, the practice of slavery has been abolished, and where a certain degree of civilisation exists, are as well informed as to the respect due to the law of contracts as are our European workmen. All are provided with writings or certificates stating the length of the service, wages, etc. etc.

“I do not at this moment see any modifications called for in the existing legislative dispositions. I will take care to denote them in succeeding reports should their necessity be indicated by circumstances.”

From this statement Baron Van Eetvelde very naturally concluded that the existing legislation was adequate; but

he went on to say that there remained the heavy task of extending more and more its application to the regions outside the direct and immediate exercise of the State's authority. In the districts of the Lower Congo the slave trade might be considered quite stamped out, on the Middle Congo it was in course of disappearance, and on the Upper Congo, where it was essentially a military question, the campaigns were then in progress for the destruction of the Arab power. Two subsidiary but vital matters for the success of these efforts were the prohibition of modern rifles generally throughout the State, and of all guns and weapons in the upper region, by two decrees dated 11th October 1888 and 28th January 1889. Not less important, from a moral point of view, was the suppression of the spirit traffic above the Cataracts, and the imposition of a heavy, and for the blacks an almost prohibitive, duty on all spirits in the Lower Congo. Unfortunately, the neighbouring European States—especially Germany—did nothing to contribute to the growth of civilisation in this direction; and, when dealing with the baseless charges brought against the Congo administration on this head, it will be necessary to enter into the details of the spirit question, and to apportion the blame, from which there will be no difficulty in showing that the State has been entirely free.

The results achieved up to the moment of writing in 1891 were well set forth by Baron Van Eetvelde in a letter to the King in July of that year:—

“Thus is the struggle being carried on against slavery, generally by pacific means, sometimes also more energetically. For a certainty, such a work is not accomplished in a day; much must be left to time and the constancy of the effort; we must not also deceive ourselves that such a heavy task requires abundant resources and concordant means of action. A result is even now obtained: it is, that the men-hunters have been confined

to a circumscribed region, and that the Arab invasion, which was advancing as a conquering force, has been arrested from the north to the south of our territories. The camps, established at great expense by the State, have stopped the current, have prevented it descending the Congo to force its way across the Pool and menace the surrounding possessions. If the State had only attained this result, it would still have merited well of civilisation and humanity.

“The day that the peril of slavery shall have been conjured, the disinherited populations of the upper river will be also summoned to inaugurate a new era of material and moral development, in imitation of the tribes of the Lower and the Middle Congo. Here, in fact, the progress is undeniable. Slowly but surely the black is being transformed, his intellectual horizon is being enlarged, his sentiments are being refined. A thousand facts, in appearance insignificant, mark the halting-place left behind. The black to-day has his place marked out *there*, where ten years ago no one thought of utilising him. He is to be seen, according to his aptitude, as a clerk in the Administration, as a postman, as a warehouseman, as a pilot or sailor on the river boats, also as a smith, mechanic, sawyer, or brickmaker. Porter in the region of the Cataracts, navvy on the railway, he offers his arms and his labour when the remuneration satisfies the new needs that have taken birth in him. Trader above all, he becomes of a more delicate taste in the acceptance of merchandise in exchange; the stuffs, the tissues of striking colours but mediocre quality, formerly sought for, have to-day no demand, and must give place to articles of a superior kind. He accepts money; he is even acquainted with paper money, for many purchases are effected by means of bonds, or of *moukandes*, which are then cashed at the European revenue offices. He has the consciousness of his own personality—claims loudly the redress of any

wrong which he conceives himself to have suffered. Grown more sociable, he receives, without distrust in his house, the stranger and the traveller. He begins to repudiate his old primitive customs, such as the *casque*, or the proof of poison. He sends his children to the missionary schools; and, to encourage him in this, the



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State has started a system of colonies of schools, the pupils of which are rapidly increasing, notably at Berghe-Sainte-Marie. Fetishism, finally, is beginning to lose adherents, and religious proselytism proceeds not without success.

“The legend of the negro opposed to all improve-

ment can no longer be maintained in face of this experience. We may consider it as certain that the native, well conducted and well directed, is fit to be assimilated with civilisation. Guarding ourselves against optimism, we do not disguise that there remains much to be done in order to introduce by successive stages that civilisation to the furthest frontiers of the State. But the facts warrant our believing in the possibility of such a result, which is the final object of the enter-



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prise of your Majesty. The Congo State in the six years since it was created has not failed in its task. Time and perseverance will crown the work, and it will be to Belgium, if she wishes it, that its accomplishment will belong."

When Baron Van Eetvelde wrote his next report on the subject, more than three years later—in December 1894—he was able to bring forward many accomplished facts that revealed how the area of liberty in Central Africa had been widely extended. The credit for these measures

was largely enhanced by the fact that some of them had been put in force before the Brussels Act had been drafted. After it they were amplified in some details, and enforced in all with greater rigidity. The State authorities, as has been said, bore the brunt of the labour and responsibility that ensued from the moral declarations of Europe at Brussels. Their efforts entailed the struggle, sanguinary but brief as it proved, with the Arabs, and a few months before the date of the report it had terminated in the signal triumph on the Lualaba and Tanganyika. To cement and confirm its results there remained to pursue the supporters of the slave trade to their lairs on the north-east and in the south. It was also necessary to establish a secret police, and exercise a close surveillance on the movements of those who would break or evade the law. But, above all, it was necessary to add to the number of posts and to bring the Courts nearer to the centres of population. With regard to the former, Dungen on the Uelle was established in the direction of the Nile, and, as for the latter, the magistrates moved the seat of their jurisdiction from Boma to Leopoldville and New Antwerp.

The area of effective occupation steadily increased, the number of stations augmented every year, and with this progress of authority the good work of civilisation also advanced. When Baron Van Eetvelde next surveyed the situation in Central Africa, he was able to record the practical extinction of the slave trade in all its forms under the flag of the Congo State. I extract, as the most effective conclusion to this chapter, from his report of 25th January 1897, the brilliantly written paragraphs, in which the Secretary of State for the Independent State of the Congo narrates the story of the great triumph thus achieved in the cause of humanity :—

“The Congo State inherited from its birth the heaviest

and most perilous task in the anti-slavery work. The territories which fell to it had the sad privilege of being in their greater part handed over to the razzias, and of including the principal slave centres and the most important markets of human flesh. However willing were the Powers, who in the Berlin Act solemnly condemned the slave trade, the most optimistic only dared to hope for the disappearance of the abominable practices, like those Stanley had witnessed on the banks of the Upper Congo, in a distant future.

“In truth, the crusade against the slave trade, in some measure ordered by the Berlin Conference, remained in the following years in the condition of a mere vow; and the Congo Government, which on its own account had then already organised a chain of posts of defence against the invasions of the slave hunters, was condemned to deplore that, despite some partial successes, a great part of its provinces still remained in their power. Such were at that epoch the horrors and cruelties denounced to the civilised world, such was the deplorable situation in which the people of Central Africa, decimated and massacred by their oppressors, passed an agonising existence, that, struck by a sentiment of legitimate indignation, the Powers again decided by the Act of Brussels to deal a decisive blow at the slave trade.

“The Brussels Conference characterised the part reserved to the Congo State in the anti-slavery campaign, the importance of the undertakings which devolved upon it, the difficulties of the task which assigned it the perilous honour of being the advance guard on the battlefield. The number of enemies to be fought, the organisation of their bands, their installation from a remote date in the regions which they had terrorised, their supply in firearms and munitions, the subjection even of the natives, were so many grounds of apprehension and disquietude as to the final issue of the struggle

undertaken, and as to the fate ultimately reserved for the African populations. It really seemed, in that encounter between civilisation and slavery, of which the stake was the life and liberty of millions of human beings, as if failure would ruin for ever the hope of a better future. Thus it was that circumstances had placed in the hands of the Congo State the destiny of Central



A CONGO SCHOOL—FIELD WORK.

Africa and its tribes, and the situation was tersely defined by an English missionary when, with the experience acquired during a long residence in Africa, he wrote in 1893, during the progress of the military campaign: 'I am convinced that, unless the Arabs be annihilated, a general massacre will ensue;—this is the moment for the Europeans to play their last card against the Arabs.

Whether they will carry the day or not, I could not say.'

"Civilisation did carry the day; and has not history to register that this victory for the Congo State—due, moreover, to the bravery of Belgian officers—entitled it to merit well of those interested in the fate of the native populations? If to-day there opens for them a new era of liberty and regeneration, if the amelioration of their material and moral condition can now be pursued, they owe it to the annihilation and definitive ruin of the promoters of slavery.

"Elsewhere has been told at the price of what sacrifices of men and money, at the price of what valour in every case, and of what heroism in some, these results have been attained. The facts are there to attest that these sacrifices have not been in vain. The men-hunters reduced to impotence, their bands dispersed, their chiefs disappeared, the fortresses of slavery laid level with the ground, the natives rebuilding their villages under the shadow of the posts of the State, giving themselves up to the peaceful pursuits of cultivation and planting—an era of calm, of tranquillity, succeeding the sombre and sanguinary episodes of the old régime. Every mail from Africa brings the proof of the progress of this period of pacification, and shows the natives, delivered from an odious yoke, recovering confidence and living peaceably in their own abodes."

CHAPTER XII

THE ADVANCE TO THE NILE

HAVING obtained the right to extend its authority over a great portion of the old Egyptian province of the Bahr Gazelle, although this was diminished to the territory of Lado by the French Convention, there was no reason for the State to delay the advance to the Nile, and to thus place the seal of acquisition to the concessions on paper. Before the convention was signed, Belgian explorers had penetrated into the region north of the Mbomu, and by the aid of the Sultans of the north—Bangasso, Rafai, and Semio—Hanollet had reached the Chari, Milis the Adda, Fievez the Bahr Gazelle. These gallant representatives of the Congo State had actually secured the southwestern outworks of the Khalifa's power, and were on the eve of creating a firm barrier against its expansion, when the arrangement with France necessitated the withdrawal of all the posts north of the Mbomu. The moment of compulsory withdrawal was doubly unfortunate, because it coincided with a renewed advance of the Mahdists. In 1894 the Khalifa despatched one of his Emirs and a relative, Kashim el Mousse, with a few thousand men, to reassert his power in the Bahr Gazelle. Although the Belgians repulsed several attacks on their outposts, their subsequent withdrawal by arrangement with France could not fail to be regarded as a discomfiture for the Europeans. From that day to this France has failed to reach the point of authority achieved by the

Congo State in the Bahr Gazelle in 1894, and there is no reason to suppose that the Marchand Expedition will achieve any permanent results.

Some serious troubles with the Azandé chiefs of the Upper Uelle diverted the attention of the State authorities and also their resources to another matter. In March 1894 the Sultan Mbili assassinated Captain Bonvalet and Sergeant Devos, and in the following February the Sultan N'Doruma caused to be murdered in a treacherous manner Captain Janssens, Sergeant Van

Holsbeck, and fifty-nine soldiers. These outrages called for immediate reparation ; but although Captain Christiaens inflicted some punishment on Mbili soon after Bonvalet's murder, it was not until the first few weeks of 1896 that Commandant Chaltin, a gallant officer and able administrator, with whose name the Nile successes will be permanently associated, was ready to proceed with the task to be done.



COMMANDANT CHALTIN.

Leaving Nyangara on 1st March, Chaltin first attacked Mbili; who, although defeated and driven out of his chief camps, still breathed defiance, and in a desperate attempt to recover what he had lost, assumed the offensive by attacking the Belgian camp. In accordance with the chivalrous customs of his race, he gave notice of his intention, and was defeated with heavy loss. This event occurred on 17th March 1896, and after it Mbili became a hunted fugitive, attended by only a few of his women and warriors. Then Chaltin turned to attack N'Doruma, and on the plain of Bongoyo there took place a pitched

battle with that chief's brother M'Bima, in which the Azandés fought with admirable courage. They charged three times to within twenty yards of the Belgian line, under the concentrated fire of three hundred magazine rifles. When M'Bima was vanquished, there remained N'Doruma, whose chief residence was reached on 5th April. Here he had collected all his fighting men, of whom many were armed with rifles; and when the Belgians approached they again assumed, perhaps recklessly, the offensive. The fight that followed lasted nearly an hour, and the blacks again fought with admirable heroism, rushing back to rescue the bodies of their fallen companions, under a heavy fire. At last they were driven in rout from the field, but their losses would have been heavier if the pursuit had not been interrupted by Chaltin being accidentally wounded by one of his own men. N'Doruma, a man of ability, and with the reputation of unqualified success, was thus compelled, like his neighbours, to become a fugitive; and Chaltin had the satisfaction of exacting complete atonement for the treacherous murder of his comrades-in-arms from an enemy who had never known defeat. The merit of the success of this six weeks' campaign was enhanced by the fact that it was gained with troops of the Congo valley, led by only four Europeans besides the commander.

As a preliminary to the further operations, several forts were constructed in the Uelle region, and, as the *raison d'être* for their creation was the possible advance of the Mahdists, they were made after a stronger fashion than the ordinary type of fort in the Congo valley. Of these the principal are Dungu, Kubasidu, and Dirfi. Each of these is surrounded by a deep and broad ditch and a high parapet, and contains a battery of six guns. The garrison of Dungu is eight hundred and ten men, and of the others about five hundred men, from which an idea may be formed of the force the State has felt it necessary to throw out in a north-easterly direction. In conjunction

with these forts, a second line had also been constructed along the Upper Aruwimi and Itimbiri. Here Avakubi and Ekwanga are the two most important positions.

Having chastised the hostile chiefs named, the arrangements for the advance to the Nile were hurried on, and it was proposed to utilise both lines of advance—that by the Uelle and that by the Aruwimi-Itimbiri. The column operating by the former, with its base at Dungu, was entrusted to the command of Chaltin, while that operating from the Aruwimi, which was to form a junction with it at Dirfi, had as its leader Baron Dhanis, the conqueror of Manyema, who had just returned from Europe. At the end of 1896 all the preparations were made, and the order to advance was given. The latter column moved forward in several detachments, the advance guard of which was under the command of Captain Leroi, but before reaching Dirfi its progress was arrested by several mutinies on the part of the troops composing the force. In consequence of this unexpected occurrence, Baron Dhanis was unable to advance any farther, and his column took no part in the Nile Expedition. The consideration of this important and calamitous event can be better treated in a separate chapter, while in this the fortunes of the column that succeeded in hoisting the State flag on the banks of the Nile may be followed.

To Chaltin, as Commissary-General of the Uelle district, and as the chastiser of the truculent Sultans of Mbili and N'Doruma, fell the task of combining with Baron Dhanis in the advance to the Nile, and his good fortune decreed that he should enjoy the credit of the success achieved. . On the 14th December 1896 his column marched out of Dungu, and it was composed of seven detachments or companies, each a hundred strong, under the command of a Belgian officer. A further company of nearly a hundred men, under Lieutenant Saroléa, was organised, in the early stages of the march, to watch and

guard the movements of the two hundred and fifty carriers who conveyed the stores of the column; and attached to this was also a band of nineteen musicians. There was also a Niam Niam or Azandé contingent of fifty rifles and five hundred lancers, under their chiefs Renzi and Bafuka. In the line of march the Niam Niam contingent was employed as flankers and as a rear guard, while the bulk of the regular force with the artillery marched in the centre of the column.

On 1st January 1897 the force left Surrur, re-named Vankerckhovenville, in honour of the gallant soldier of that name, and situated a little north of the third parallel of north latitude and about $29^{\circ} 30'$ of east longitude. The distance between this place and the Nile is two hundred miles, and many travellers—of whom Baker, Junker, and Emin need only be named—had given such complete geographical details about it that the region might be described as thoroughly well known. In his description of this part of the march, Chaltin says in his official report that the country was remarkably fertile, and that the people were entirely given up to agricultural pursuits. Elephants, buffaloes, antelopes, and goats were also abundant. The villages were surrounded by a thick cactus hedge, with the smallest entrance through which a human being could pass. The natural resources of the country, and the pacific industrious character of the Loggos tribes, justify sanguine hopes of the future of a region which only requires peace and the presence of a just, if firm, government to rank among the most promising divisions of Central Africa. The following extract will suffice to show that there is no exaggeration in this prediction about the Bahr Gazelle:—"On the 13th January we reached Kaduruma, where we were surprised at the sight of the plantations, a veritable ocean of sorghum extending in all directions as far as the horizon. What wealth! Here and there, in these immense fields,

is erected a kind of observatory, about sixteen to twenty feet high, in which are posted children, who cry, sing, and shout in order to frighten the grain devourers."

The advance of the column through this region was in the main unopposed. One or two skirmishes, in which the natives were dispersed by a few volleys, while the column itself had only some men wounded by poisoned arrows, represented all the fighting until the valley of the Nile and the stations of the Mahdists were approached. On the 14th February, after a two months' march, Chaltin's force reached the Nile at the old (and then destroyed) Egyptian station of Bedden. The very day of its arrival, the scouts of the column exchanged shots with those of the Dervishes sent out to encounter the Europeans from the station of Redjaf. A two days' halt was necessary to allow of the arrival of the rear guard and of one or two reconnoitring parties.

In the evening of the 16th February the sentinels of the Belgian force retired on the camp with the news that the enemy was approaching, and immediately afterwards there appeared on a hill, about a mile off, a body of Dervishes under several banners. Two shells well directed sufficed to disperse them, and during the night no attack was made on the camp. Having brought up all his troops, Chaltin determined to assume the offensive, and, having provided for the security of his camp, he marched northwards at six in the morning of 17th February. The Nile flowed on his right hand, and protected that flank. On his left, the Azandé lancers and rifles scouted, and served as a screen for the regulars. At seven o'clock the advance guard came in sight of the Dervishes, drawn up in a long line on some heights, extending from the Nile to another river parallel with it. The position was some two miles in length, and appeared impregnable, a defile through the hills being specially well guarded. Chaltin formed his attacking column of five companies, extended in loose



CONGO MILITARY BAND.

order, while he held the three remaining companies in reserve. The Dervishes opened fire, but their aim was so high that the men in the fighting line suffered little, whereas those in reserve lost a few at the very commencement of the action. For half an hour the State forces, well sheltered behind rocks, reserved their fire, while the Dervishes wasted their ammunition to little effect. The Krupp gun, worked under the direction of Sergeant Cajot, threw a number of shells into the centre of the enemy. After these preliminary movements, the Mahdists showed an intention of assuming the offensive by attacking on the flanks, whereupon the Belgian commander at once ordered the advance, and his troops took up a new position at a distance of little more than two hundred yards from the enemy. They then opened fire, which was sustained for some time with great effect. The Mahdists, suffering considerably from it, resumed their attempt to outflank Chaltin's force; but that officer, perceiving the movement in good time, baffled it by the prompt advance of the greater part of his reserve. To complete the effect of this advantage, Chaltin ordered the chief Renzi, son of the Sultan Semio, mentioned in a previous chapter, to charge with his body of lancers, and cut off the flanking force from the main body of the Dervishes. This manœuvre was so skilfully executed that the right wing of the enemy was completely cut off, and suffered considerable loss.

In the meantime the main position of the enemy was assailed and carried by assault. Three companies carried the defile, while the two others stormed the heights. The Arabs fought well, and at first retreated slowly. A Belgian officer, Lieutenant Saroléa, was killed at the head of his company in the attack on the defile, but his was the only European life lost during the action. The Dervishes suffered considerably, and, after the heights were carried, their retreat became a flight, during which they threw away arms and ammunition. Their chief leader, Mahomed Adi

Badi, was among the slain, and among the killed were found many Egyptians and Abyssinians as well as Soudanese. Considering that the Dervishes held a naturally strong position, were well armed, and fought at first with great confidence, the victory was a very considerable one. Chaltin attributed his decisive and quickly obtained success—for the action was won in an hour and a half—to the enemy's mistaken tactics in delivering the flank attack. He wrote : " Well entrenched in the hills, and numbering two thousand men, they could have resisted us for a long time, if they had not committed the mistake of attempting a turning movement."

The day's fighting was not over. The engagement described ended at half-past eight, and the force resumed its march. All the affluents of the Nile were dry, and for seventeen miles the troops progressed under a burning sun. At half-past one the advance guard came in sight of the Dervish position at Redjaf. Here the Dervishes had guns in a battery, but the shells they threw proved quite innocuous. They had also concealed a part of their men in a ravine close to the Nile bank, and with these they attempted a flank attack, which was fortunately discovered in good time and repulsed. The action then became general, and as the State troops arrived they attacked in greater earnestness. The Dervishes were driven into the town of Redjaf, and the troops followed them, fighting from street to street and house to house. At seven o'clock in the evening the action was over, although the Mahdists kept up a desultory fire for many hours later. The day's fighting had resulted in two defeats, in the open, of the forces of Khartoum, and in the capture of the town of Redjaf. More than twelve hours separated the first shot in the morning from the last at night, and the interval had been filled up by a march of nearly twenty miles as well. It would be difficult for any troops to show greater courage or endurance than the Congo force on this occasion.

The town of Redjaf was captured on 17th February, but there remained its citadel, and no one supposed that it would be surrendered without a blow. But when the sun rose on the 18th it was soon discovered that the place was evacuated, and that the Mahdists, having lost eight of their fighting Emirs and several hundred men killed, were in no mood to fight to the death. They availed themselves of the darkness to escape northwards. A considerable spoil was taken at Redjaf, including three cannon, an enormous number of weapons, including seven hundred breechloaders, and a welcome supply of provisions. This second success was obtained for a comparatively trifling loss on the part of the State forces. The day following the fall of Redjaf, Chaltin marched as far north as Lado, "a solitude surrounded by marshes," and occupied the most northern point of the territory left the State by the arrangement with France of August 1894. The surrounding tribes testified their gladness at the repulse of the Mahdists; and as Redjaf was the only post they had maintained on the Upper Nile, its capture signified the disappearance of their power from the old Equatorial province.

In this remarkably satisfactory and speedy manner, with equal credit to Commandant Chaltin and the men who followed him, was the advance to the Nile accomplished. The success of the Congo State forces over the followers of the despot of Khartoum was one of the first of the blows struck for his downfall. As a military feat it was interesting and instructive, because it served to show that the Mahdists were not such formidable warriors as a hasty deduction from Abu Klea and other Soudan battles would show. They were brave and fanatical, but bravery and fanaticism have never availed against superior confidence, calmness, and skill. There are those who wished to make the alleged formidableness and invincibility of the Dervishes, for their own exoneration, a kind of fetishism.

Chaltin, in his own quiet and effective manner, was one of the first to destroy this cult, by showing that they could be beaten by a smaller force, and that black troops, led by a few white faces, could do the work as effectually as a special service corps.

Since the return of Commandant Chaltin on leave to Europe the command on the Nile has been exercised by Commandant Hanollet. The Belgian garrison on the Nile is not less than three thousand strong; one gunboat has actually reached the river; and in a short time Commandant Chaltin will return to the scene where he did such excellent work, and where he will no doubt find fresh openings for his energy and capacity. No one who has met Commandant Chaltin can doubt that in him the Congo State possesses a brave, energetic, and single-minded soldier. The mishap of the 21st of May, when three Belgian officers, Walhousen, Coppejans, and Bien-aimé, were drowned or wounded in an ambushade near Redjaf, possessed no significance.

The success obtained in the early weeks of 1897 has proved permanent. The Dervishes have never attempted to recover the ground they then lost to Chaltin. In the meantime the position of the Congo State in the Lado territory has been immensely strengthened, despite the diversion of attention to the mutiny of the men composing the Dhanis column. The posts of Dungu, Dirfi, and others are held by large garrisons. At Redjaf a considerable force, well capable of assuming the offensive if the necessity should arise, occupies a strong position, and Commandant Chaltin has added to his reputation as a soldier by the prudent and capable administration he has carried on during the eighteen months that have elapsed since the victory on the Nile. It only remains to strengthen the position and to increase the striking power of the State, by placing on the upper waters of the Nile, in that section which has been assigned to it, one or two gunboats.

These will be sent by the Congo railway to Stanley Pool, thence up the river to the Uelle or the Aruwimi, and beyond that in sections to their destination. The presence of a small flotilla of this description will effectually close the avenue of escape for the Mahdists to the south after the fall of the Khalifa's power, with the recovery of Khartoum and Omdurman. Even as it is, the Belgian garrison at Redjaf would be well able to account for any number of Mahdists likely to be arrayed against it, and its presence alone will probably suffice, when the break-up of the Mahdist system happens, to induce the relics of the Mohammedan fanatical force to turn for refuge in some other direction. That closing of the southern avenue was to be the Congo State's contribution to the crowning work of civilisation in the Soudan; and it is on record that the King of the Belgians, with less than the usual little encouragement all his great projects in Central Africa have received from the Belgian people, and in face of great diplomatic difficulties, has made the contribution in the success of the campaign for the occupation of Lado and Redjaf.

Great as was the success of the Belgians on the Nile, it would have been greater but for the attenuation of their sphere of operations by the action of French diplomacy. Even in respect to the little left for the Congo State, dissatisfaction was expressed in French Colonial circles when the success of the Chaltin Expedition demonstrated that the King had made his rights on paper a solid territorial acquisition. This sentiment was rendered the more intelligible as the difficulties in front of the Liotard and Marehand Expeditions became clearer, and as the French saw a rapid success in that part of the Bahr Gazelle to which they had advanced pretensions recede before them. The position of the Congo State on the Nile is in strict conformity with the convention with France, and that Power is never

likely to seriously propose the cancelling or modification of its terms. It will await, then, the development of events in the Khartoum region and the western provinces of the Soudan—Kordofan and Darfur. In that stage of the Upper Nile question its part will consist in closing the route of escape for the Dervishes by the great river to the Lakes. But when the Mahdist power has been shattered, and the administration of the regions above the junction of the two Niles has to be strenuously taken in hand, then it will only be natural for the British Government to revert to and reconfirm the convention it signed with the Congo State in May 1894, by which, as has been explained, the whole of the Bahr Gazelle province was leased to King Leopold. The State will have deserved this reward and mark of confidence by the useful co-operation it has already rendered, and will continue to render, in the break-up of the fanatical, uncivilised, and devastating power established by the Mahdi and his successor, the Khalifa, at Khartoum. The hope may perhaps be indulged that, in the eventual taking over of its old provinces by Egypt that must follow the recovery of Khartoum, which is now so imminent, French opinion may be led to see as satisfactory a settlement of the question as is practicably attainable, in the reversion of the Bahr Gazelle province to the Congo State.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CONGO PUBLIC FORCE

BEFORE describing the misfortunes of the Dhanis column and the serious mutiny of the Batetela contingent, it will be well to give an account of the State's military forces, which are now known under the title of the Congo Public Force.

When the International Association began its operations, and during the first years after the creation of the State, all the men employed for military purposes were foreigners. They were, of course, blacks, but not Congolese. The men were recruited in Zanzibar, and along the West Coast at Lagos, Sierra Leone, Elmira, and Accra. They were thus divisible into two classes—Zanzibaris and Haussas. They were not only efficient in a military sense, but they were also thoroughly loyal, having no reason for sympathy with the tribes with which they had to fight. On the other hand, the maintenance of this body of troops was extremely costly. The men received in pay one shilling a day (1 franc 25 cents), besides their food, uniform, and attendance when ill. They were also sent back to their homes on the expiration of their term of engagement at the expense of the authorities, and, as their engagement was only for three years, this formed an important item in the cost of the contingent. The resources of the State would not admit of so heavy a burden being permanently endured. Another reason for altering the system was furnished by the difficulty in

procuring Haussa recruits; and at last this difficulty was rendered insuperable by the British authorities on the Gold Coast prohibiting any further recruiting of Haussas by foreign States. But before this extreme step was taken the Congo Government had practically solved the difficulty for itself.

As far back as the year 1885 a commencement had been made in the raising of a native local force, as supplementary to the main body of the regular troops. Captain Coquilhat, when he founded Equateurville in that year, engaged some of the Bangala tribe as an armed police, and his example was followed a little later by Captain Van Dorpe among the Manyanga. As new stations were founded in all directions, the application of the same principle increased the force to considerable dimensions; and the reports as to the fitness of the men for a military career proving favourable, the natural consequence followed in a decision to employ only aboriginal races in the force entrusted with the defence of the territory and the maintenance of internal order. At the moment, then, that the burden of maintaining three thousand alien troops began to grow intolerable, there was discovered the material for a national force that would render their employment perfectly needless. In 1888 an order was issued to form eight companies of one hundred to one hundred and fifty men, to be increased if necessary to two hundred to two hundred and fifty men.

In July 1891 Baron Van Eetvelde and the Governor-General, M. Camille Janssen, drew up a scheme for the formation of the Public Force, which was immediately approved and passed into law by the decree of the Sovereign.

The principal features of the scheme were, that the force should be divided into twelve companies corresponding with the administrative districts, and that one hundred and twenty European officers, chiefly Belgians, should be

appointed to the command and disciplining of this force. The different grades of this army were : one commandant, eleven captains, ten lieutenants, thirty-nine sub-lieutenants, and sixty sergeants. The new system of recruiting was of two kinds. The first provided for the engagement of volunteers for a period not exceeding seven years, and the second for an enforced levy of militia by order of the Governor-General, and arranged between the commissary of the district affected and the local chiefs.



RECRUITS FOR THE PUBLIC FORCE.

The levy was to be made, wherever possible by lot, among the men between the ages of fourteen and thirty. The term of service for the latter was to be five years, with a further period of two years in the reserve. Each man received, besides food for himself and his wife (if he had one), a daily pay of twenty-one centimes, or a sixth of that which had to be paid for the alien soldier. Moreover, the expense of sending the men back to their homes was reduced to a minimum. The reduction in the cost meant,

besides a saving to the Government, the possibility of raising the strength of the force to a figure more in proportion to the requirements of the State. Of the old alien contingent, it had never been found possible to maintain more than three thousand men, and the native contribution to this was about two hundred; but in 1891 the latter was increased to sixteen hundred men, and in 1897, by which time the alien element had been eliminated, the Public Force was raised to a grand total of



CONGO FORCE—FIRE DISCIPLINE.

eight thousand militiamen and four thousand volunteers. The number of companies had been raised to twenty-two, with a nominal strength of nine thousand five hundred and forty men at the end of last year, whereas in 1891 the total was only two thousand nine hundred and fifty.

For the purpose of training these forces, seven camps of about five hundred men each were formed, and the period of training the men undergo is fixed at eighteen months. The uniform is blue linen, or, for full uniform, blue cloth, with a scarlet fez. The arm in general use



CONGO FORCE—TARGET PRACTICE.

is the Albini, with a short bayonet. The white officers carry the Mauser rifle, with a magazine. The greatest pains is taken in the fire-training and discipline of the men. Competitions are held every three months among sections of fifty men, and prizes awarded. A great improvement has been effected in the housing of the troops, who are now almost entirely accommodated in brick barraeks. The artillery of the force is of consider-



FORT AT CHINKAKASSA.

able strength, and includes, besides Krupps, sixteen Maxims and twenty-four Nordenfelts.

The seven camps of instruction are Zambi, for the Lower Congo; Kinshassa, Bolobo, Irebu, Kassongo, Umangi. La Romée, for the Upper Congo. The principal armed camps, as they are called (because they are bases of military power), are those at Lusambo, Bomokandi, and the Aruwimi; but Vankerckhovenville, Dungu, and Redjaf are now of equal, if not of greater, importance. At Kinshassa on Stanley Pool a fort with a battery has been constructed for the protection of Leopoldville and the

railway terminus ; and here an experiment has been successfully tried of utilising the services of prisoners of war. Men selected from the captives of the numerous expeditions have been passed through a probationary course on the works of this place, and in this manner a considerable number of recruits have been obtained for the Public Force on more favourable terms than the militia—men recruited through the chiefs. Kinshassa is not the only fortified place within the State territory ; for at Chinkakassa, near



THE CONGO POLICE.

Boma, a strong fort has been constructed, commanding the navigation of the Congo and the approaches from the ocean. Here Captain Petillon, of the Belgian Engineers, has placed eight Krupps and a number of smaller guns in an admirably selected position, while the Mongos tribe, from the Equateurville district, has supplied an adequate number of skilful and handy gunners. The authorities of the Congo State will experience no difficulty in procuring suitable men for this arm of their Public Force.

The first and oldest company of the Public Force

deserves a special notice to itself. This is the auxiliary company of the Congo Railway, and was founded by royal decree of 9th August 1890, or twelve months earlier than the decree constituting the general force. Its organisation was entrusted to Captain Weyns, an officer of the Carabiniers. Its strength was first fixed at the modest total of fifty men ; in 1892 it was increased to a hundred men, and afterwards it received a further addition of fifty men. The task entrusted to this corps was the protection



PUBLIC FORCE—A MARCH OUT.

of the railway works and of the villages through which the railway passed. As eight thousand navvies were employed on the line, and as these were composed of many nationalities, the task was no sinecure, but it was performed with perfect success and without friction. The auxiliary force was recruited in a different manner from the rest of the military. It contained several elements: for instance twenty-five Senegalese, and fifty Batetelas from the country between the Sankuru and the Lualaba. Although of precisely the same race as the mutineers of the

Dhanis column, the latter gave no trouble in 1897. Like the other militiamen of the State, they serve for five years with the colours and for two years in the reserve, but the cost of maintaining this corps was borne by the railway company. It, however, forms an integral part of the general Public Force, and can be utilised if any occasion arises. Captain Weyns reported so favourably of the quickness of the Batetela recruits and their military aptitude, that all vacancies in this company are now, like those in the rest of the Public Force, filled up with natives of the Congo territory.

With regard to the system of conscription in force, I cannot give a better or clearer description than by translating the paragraphs relating thereto from Baron Van Eetvelde's report of 25th January 1897 :—

“The State has set itself to the task of creating a purely national army, with the view of lightening the budget of the considerable charges which weighed upon it through having to recruit abroad, and also with the view of putting an end, in accordance with the highest dictates of policy, to its dependence in this matter upon foreigners. It considers, moreover, the period of military service as a salutary school for the native, where he will learn respect for authority and the obligations of duty. It is happy, from this view, to see the number of national militiamen increase, and, in order that the institution may preserve all its value, special provisions have been made to prevent abuses, to regulate the recruiting, to assure the welfare of soldiers on service, and to provide occupation for those who have served their term. The decree on the recruiting of the Public Force is not more rigorous than any other similar act of legislation, and the incorporation is made under as sure guarantees of human liberty as in the armies of Europe. As is the case in almost all countries, the recruiting, independent of voluntary engagements, is made by annual levies, but ‘within the limits of the

contingent fixed by the King-Sovereign,' and within these limits 'the Governor-General determines the districts and localities in which the levy is to be made, and also the proportion to be furnished by each locality.' 'The mode according to which the levy operates is determined by the district commissary in agreement with the native chief;' and although the drawing by lot is recommended, we must recognise that it would be difficult, in the present circumstances, to have recourse always and everywhere to this method in each village, and to refuse to recognise the customary authority of the village chief, when he designates the militiamen among his own dependants. . . . 'The length of active service is for five years. At the expiration of this term, the men pass two years in the reserve.' The time passed under the colours, then, cannot exceed seven years—a term which experience shows not to be excessive; and it is strictly forbidden to keep under the flags men who are no longer borne on the lists, or whose term of service has expired, under pain of misdemeanour. These organic dispositions have been completed by instructions, which prescribe on the officers 'to watch carefully that the men receive a sufficient nourishment, are comfortably housed, that the sick are well taken care of, that the men are always properly treated, that their misconduct is dealt with in conformity with the regulations, and carefully avoiding all excessive severity.'

"In fact, this system renders light for the native his obligations as a soldier. We do not desire any other proof than those four thousand volunteers who are actually enrolled, and those numerous re-engagements, which show the taste of the native for the profession of arms. It was not with an army of discontents that the State could have carried out its anti-slavery campaign. The State continues to interest itself in its soldiers after their term has expired. The time-expired men, sent back

to their homes at its expense, together with their wives and children (if there are any), are the object of special protection, and receive concessions of land in a station at their own choice."

It is often easier to create an active army than an efficient reserve, but without the latter the former is of doubtful value. As organised in the first instance, the reserve of the Public Force was limited to the time-expired men, who remained on the lists for a further period of two years.



BARRACKS AT BOMA.

For that purpose they could only be called out by order of the Governor-General, and, except under special orders, they were to be exempted from drill, and to fulfil their duties in the garrison of the camps, and not on active service during the expeditions that might be undertaken. Experience has shown that the reserve thus created is inadequate to the requirements of the State. It was therefore decided, at the beginning of the year 1898, to form another reserve independent of the reserve of the active army. This corps is to be composed of men who

have passed through the army and the regular reserve, and of contingents recruited by annual levies, conformably with the stipulations of the decree of 30th July 1891, or by voluntary engagement. Under none of these classes can a man be admitted to the reserve before he is fourteen or after he is thirty-five years of age. The term of service is for twelve years, except for those who have served in the regular army and reserve; and in this case it is reduced to five years, which makes a total service of



PUBLIC FORCE—A SALUTE.

twelve years. With regard to volunteers in this branch of the State forces, they are allowed to enrol themselves for a less period than the twelve years. As a commencement, the contingent for this body for the year 1898 has been fixed at five hundred men.

This proposal has encountered some criticism; but the critics seem to base their objection to the scheme, not on its merits, but on the form in which the law was put into effect. The criticism, so far as can be judged, has no justification, for in the case of time-expired men the extra five

years carry with them such benefits as to be an advantage, while the men of the annual contingent or the volunteers perform their military service to the State in a modified and convenient form, as the course of training for this second reserve is restricted to a period of six months. It is true that the total term of military obligation has been, as a matter of fact, extended to twelve years, but, when the regulations are carefully drawn up and well applied, there is nothing excessive in such a term. Assuming that



CONGO FORCE—INSPECTION.

a man is drawn for service at sixteen or seventeen, which may be regarded as an average age, his military career is well over before he reaches the age of thirty, and the case would be quite exceptional of his being on the list at the maximum age of thirty-five. But even if he were it would be no great hardship, as the recompenses for military service in respect of the grant of lands are very considerable. In fact, it would not be going too far to term the reservists of the Congo State military agriculturists, and in that capacity they might be compared with the Grenzer



CONGO FORCE—A PARADE.

or military colonies established along the frontier between the Austrian empire and Turkey in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

To sum up, the military forces of the State are represented at the present moment by a force of about twelve thousand men, of which nearly ten thousand may be considered efficient. The germ of a new reserve has been established by the decree of 1898, and in a few years this force will have attained a sufficient strength to make it a useful auxiliary in circumstances of difficulty or danger. It seems clear that the military resources of the State are adequate for its immediate necessities, and that they will suffice to enable it not only to maintain peace within its frontiers, but to hold its own in any contentions that may arise on its borders. At the present time the Congo Public Force is, after the Anglo-Egyptian army, the most numerous and efficient native army between the Mediterranean and Cape Colony, and the importance of this fact will be made clearer with the lapse of time. It is sufficient for the moment to note that the Congo State controls a force that will secure for it the respect of its neighbours; and it will be seen in the next chapter that the mutiny of one section of the Batetela contingent has not furnished any valid reason for modifying that conclusion. That experience has at least demonstrated the necessity of some simple precautions in the management of an alien mercenary force, such as mixing the races in each garrison, and never employing the tribes in their own native districts. Had these precautions been observed, there would have been no Batetela mutiny, and if they are maintained in the future its repetition is highly improbable.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BATETELA MUTINIES

No human undertaking can escape the troubles that attend the greatest success. The ordeal of misfortune tests the quality of the ruling race as of the individual. Young as the Congo State is in years, it has passed through the bitter experience, bred of disappointment in the loyalty of its servants, which tasked its power and established the merit of its system. It would be far fetched to compare the Batetela mutiny with that of the Sepoys in India; but as the story is unfolded, the reader will have no difficulty in seeing how many points there were in common between the two events, and that both of them furnished equally gratifying evidence to the superiority of the *morale* of the European races. The mutiny of the black troops of the Dhanis column was the principal and culminating episode of the crisis, but it was preceded by a mutiny on a minor scale at Luluabourg, which claims our first consideration.

In the chapter on the Arab campaign, the circumstances of the execution of Gongo Lutete were set forth, and the irritation that thereupon ensued among the bodyguard of the dead chief. They were removed, as a matter of precaution, by the Belgian authorities, first to Lusambo, and afterwards to Luluabourg. As they marched out of Gandu, Gongo Lutete's camp, they fired on the people, and threatened to return again with fire and sword. When they reached Luluabourg these men were invited

to become soldiers, and they forthwith entered the Public Force. They attracted favourable notice by their intelligence, willingness, and pluck, and for a time it seemed as if the State had obtained the services of a real fighting race. Unfortunately, these Batetelas had not forgotten their original intention, and beneath their nominal obedience smouldered a deep resentment and a set purpose.

This intention was revealed in the summer of the year 1895; and these Batetelas, the ancient bodyguard of Gongo Lutete, rose at Luluabourg, massacred some of their officers, marched eastwards to Kabinda, surprised the post there, and turned northwards to attack Lusambo. In the attack on the Catholic mission-house, near Luluabourg, the priests valiantly defended themselves during several hours until aid reached them from Lieutenant Cassart, who had been wounded by the mutineers. This aid could not have been rendered but for the loyalty of the Zappo Zapp tribe, whose chief had firmly refused to surrender the wounded Cassart, saying, "As long as a Zappo Zapp lives, and without passing over my body, you shall never have the Belgian officer."

The number of mutineers did not exceed three hundred and fifty men; but, as they were equipped with Albini rifles, and possessed a large quantity of cartridges, they represented a far more formidable force than their numbers would signify. They were also determined to fight to the last, as their fault was beyond the hope of pardon. At Gandu and on the Lomami they had killed four or five Belgian officers, besides those murdered at Luluabourg, and the mutineers were in the full tide of a successful march to Nyangwe when Commander Lothaire, by an exceptional effort, succeeded in heading them and in throwing himself with a small force in their path. On the 18th October he brought them to action near Gandu, inflicting on them severe loss, making some prisoners, and compelling the remainder to seek refuge with the chief of

Dibué. In the meantime, Lieutenant Gillain, rallying the forces of the State in the Lomami district, had come down upon them from the north, while the movements of the Belgian officers inspired the local chiefs with such confidence that they gradually rallied to the side of the State. The mutineers fought with great determination, and in the most serious encounter, on 9th October, killed one Belgian, forty-two blacks, and wounded two Belgians and thirty-eight blacks. The first Belgian column on this occasion was actually defeated, when the second, taking the victors in reverse, restored the fortunes of the day and defeated them.

The junction of the two columns under Lothaire and Gillain was effected on 18th October, the date on which the battle just referred to was fought. The strength of the enemy, by the capture of several caravans, had been increased to some six or seven hundred men, and the reader will be interested in the following official report of this decisive action by Commandant Lothaire, one of the most energetic and capable officers in the service of the Congo State, if we eliminate the want of judgment he displayed in the Stokes affair:—

“On the 17th October M. Gillain sent me MM. Michaux, Svensson, De Besche, Jürgens, Konings, and the armourer Droeven. We were thus one thousand strong. In the morning of the 18th our troops, comprising eight hundred Albinis, attacked the camp of the mutineers. Their camp was backed by a forest; they did not believe that we should follow them into it. The combat commenced; at eight o'clock in the morning we assaulted the defences which they had accumulated in the woods and glades, alongside the path leading to the village where the Batetelas had concealed their women and booty. By two o'clock we had overcome all these obstacles; the mutineers were dispersed in the forest, and the booty taken at Luluabourg, Kabinda, and Gandu was in our hands.

It was one of the most important actions yet fought on the territory of the Congo State."

The magnitude of this success was diminished by an unfortunate contretemps. A few days later, the mutineers, during their own retreat, surprised a Belgian column. At the first volley they killed the four Belgian officers leading it, and, being afterwards reinforced by some other mutineers from two or three minor posts on the Lomami, it became necessary to resume the offensive. On 6th November Lothaire attacked their new camp at Gongo Machoffe, some distance south of Gandu. The result was a signal victory. Nearly all the surviving mutineers of Luluabourg were killed or taken prisoners; and the commanding officer closed his narrative with the words: "I cannot say if the campaign is absolutely finished or not, but I can say that there is no longer the shadow of danger for the State." The few survivors, who had fled so precipitately that a pursuit of five days failed to discover their traces, were gradually captured and given up to the State authorities by the local chiefs, until there remained of Gongo Lutete's truculent bodyguard scarcely a single living representative. In this manner was the Luluabourg mutiny finally wiped out. It had cost the State, however, the lives of many brave men; and the State authorities thereafter decided never to employ any considerable body of tribesmen in the Public Force except at a distance from their homes. The disappointment caused by the Luluabourg mutiny in the views held as to the value of the Batetelas could not help being very great.

The mutiny of the Batetelas at Luluabourg in 1895 was the precursor of the far more serious mutiny of the men of the Dhanis column in 1897. The victorious progress of the Chaltin column to the Nile has been traced. It is now necessary to describe the misfortunes of the other and larger column under Baron Dhanis, whose reputation had been made by the Arab campaign. When

orders were given to occupy the territory of Lado, to organise there an effective administration, and to create a bulwark against the Dervishes, the selection of Baron Dhanis to command the expedition was natural, and certainly justified the assertion that he was "the right man in the right place." Fully appreciating the importance of the task entrusted to him, Dhanis spared no effort to ensure success; and it was with a column of over three thousand men that he began his advance from Avakubi to the Nile. His force was echeloned between that place and the Obi when the events about to be described occurred, and the advance guard had even reached Dirfi.

Of the total force of three thousand two hundred men under Dhanis, the Batetelas and the kindred tribe of the Bakussus numbered fifteen hundred. Two thirds of these men were with the advance guard at Dirfi, when on 14th or 15th February 1897 they mutinied and killed their commanding officer, Captain Leroi, and several other officers. The cause of the mutiny is unknown, but it was probably either reluctance to take part in a distant expedition, or an uncontrollable impulse to return to their homes between the Lomami and the Lualaba. The difficulties encountered on the march were very considerable, and one Belgian officer committed suicide from chagrin at his inability to make rapid progress. As the Batetelas formed a solid body they realised that they were masters of the situation, and that the murder of a few white officers was the only barrier to executing their wishes. Having perpetrated the massacre at Dirfi they retraced their steps, murdering another officer on the Obi. Hearing of these disasters to his advance guard, Dhanis endeavoured to intercept the retreat of the mutineers, and on the 18th March an encounter took place between the force under his command and the retreating mutineers. In the beginning of the action the five hundred Batetelas,

forming part of his force, went over to their kinsmen, and, to add to the confusion, it became impossible to distinguish friends from foes, while the white officers were an easy mark. Several Belgian officers were killed, including Louis Dhanis, the brother of the commander, and at last Baron Dhanis had to order the retreat. Even this would have been impossible if Lieutenant Delecourt, with a handful of men, had not covered the movement by a desperate stand, which cost the lives of himself and his companions. In all these encounters ten Belgian officers lost their lives. Baron Dhanis retired on Avakubi, the only station in this region that held out; and having provided for its defence, which he entrusted to Commandant Henry, he hastened to Stanley Falls to organise the measures necessary for the recovery of all that had been lost.

Although it did not exercise any influence on the fortunes of the Nile Expedition, this second mutiny of the Batetelas was a rude blow to the sense of security felt in the position of the Congo State. Rumour naturally magnified the probable consequences, and even the losses of the Belgians were represented at a far higher total than the truth. These were serious enough, but several whose names were given among the slain succeeded in reaching Avakubi. The movements of the mutineers themselves were also calculated to create alarm, for they marched in a south-westerly direction towards Stanley Falls, destroying the stations they passed *en route*, so that, in all the valley of the Ituri, Avakubi was the only Belgian post left intact. When, however, they had approached quite close to Stanley Falls, they suddenly changed their course and retired in an easterly direction towards the Semliki and Lake Edward. It was by this time clear that their main object was to regain their homes in Manyema, and consequently the peril of offensive measures on their part against the State possessions might be regarded as over. None the less, an

armed band of over fifteen hundred fighting men, well supplied with ammunition and possessing some military training, constituted a standing danger to the authorities, and rendered it incumbent for them to break up the power of the mutineers at the earliest possible moment.

It must be allowed to Baron Dhanis, that if he showed some over-confidence in the excessive employment of the Batetela contingent in the advance column, he rightly discerned the intention of the mutineers to regain Manyema, and that all his measures were well taken with the object of defeating their purpose. The importance of doing so arose from the consideration, that if the mutineers succeeded in reaching their native country a great rebellion might ensue from the presence of these well-armed men, who could declare that they had killed their officers, and even defeated Baron Dhanis in person. Wherever the mutineers went, or however long their punishment might be deferred, it was imperative that they should not reach their native territory; and all the steps taken by the Belgian commander were directed towards the attainment of that purpose. Having secured the position of affairs at Stanley Falls, Baron Dhanis hastened to Nyangwe and Kassongo to prepare a suitable reception for the mutineers in that direction. As reinforcements, especially of European officers, were hurried forward from Stanley Pool on the first news of the disaster, a force of a thousand fresh troops was soon ready to co-operate in the measures for the active pursuit of the mutineers. The plan of campaign was for the garrison left at Avakubi to march south on the track of the mutineers, while Baron Dhanis proceeded to cut them off by an advance in a northerly or easterly direction, as events should determine.

Commandant Henry, an officer of great energy, and endowed with a clear head and calm courage, was the first to strike a blow. Finding that the mutineers had

vanished from the neighbourhood of Avakubi, he decided that it was safe to take the field against them. Leaving a sufficient garrison in the post, he accordingly set out in pursuit of them at the head of seven hundred men. On 30th April, while Dhanis was still at Stanley Falls, Henry began his march and reoccupied the post of Kilongo Longa. He then learnt that the rebels were encamped on the plains near Lindi, that they were suffering from smallpox, and that a black corporal named Arnoudala was in chief command. At that moment the mutineers were in close proximity to the English frontier, and it was even alleged that they contemplated crossing it.

The following summary of the experiences of a French priest named Achte, who was taken prisoner by the mutineers, will give an idea of these men and of the state of their organisation. The scene was in the Taru country, near the Semliki, which connects Lakes Albert and Albert Edward. Ignorant of the mutiny, the



COMMANDANT HENRY.

priest met a few of the State soldiers, who invited him to come and see their white officer in his camp. The unsuspecting priest, accompanied by fourteen of his neophytes, accepted the invitation, only to find that he had walked into a trap. He found the camp on a plain, covered with European huts, and crowded with men, women, and children. He was taken to the principal tent, in front of which sat forty or fifty negroes dressed in European officers' uniforms, and seated on cane chairs. He was left no time for reflection, as twenty hands were laid upon him, and he was stripped of all his clothes, with

shouts of "Kill him! kill him!" M. Achte shouted out in the local dialect, "I am a man of God; leave me alone." This created a diversion in his favour. Some of the blacks defended him, and part of his clothes were restored to him. Two of the chiefs declared to him, "We have killed the Belgians, who called us animals, and who killed our chiefs and our brothers as we kill goats. Why should we not kill you?" It may be parenthetically observed that there does not appear to be a word of truth in the accusation against the Belgians. No evidence of harsh usage has ever been adduced, and, under the circumstances of the difficult expedition in hand, the officers would naturally show every forbearance towards the men, on whose loyalty its success really depended. On the other hand, it is of course clearly proved that the difficulties of the march of the Dhanis column were very great, but they were equally shared by the Belgian officers and the black troops. If proof were needed, it would be found in the loyalty of all the other black soldiers, excepting only the Batetelas.

M. Achte declared that he was not a Belgian, that he had never injured the blacks, and that he was their true friend. Some of the women began to take his part; and his neophytes, although subjected to ill-usage, remained staunch in their loyalty by declaring that he had never struck a black. He was then given a goat to cook for food, but he refused to eat until all his followers had been given back to him. This had a great effect on the chiefs; and Malumba, the principal of them all, at last declared, "I forbid you to kill this white man. Let the man who wishes to kill him take a gun and send a bullet through him! Here he is seated at my side!" On the following day the Frenchman was allowed to leave the camp with his followers, but when he asked that his ass might be returned to him he received this reply: "You shall have nothing! That which a Manyema has once carried off

he does not return. But so that you may not write to Europe telling them that we robbed you, take ivory; we do not know what to do with it, as we have no one to carry it." M. Achte's opinion of the mutineers was given in the following words: "The revolted Manyemas are indeed terrible savages, eaters of dogs, and some tribes among them also of human flesh. From the Wangwana they have learnt to smoke hemp, which, as is known, acts like opium, and stupefies. In their caravans they have no discipline, no idea of respect towards their chiefs." It was clear from his evidence and from that of others, that the mutineers were only formidable for the moment, or, in plainer terms, while their supply of ammunition lasted, and that, considerable as it was, could not endure for ever.

While Henry was marching southwards, Lieutenant Sannaes had in the Semliki country inflicted a rude repulse on the mutineers when they attacked his post and endeavoured to serve it as they had done others. This success at Katué had followed close upon M. Achte's adventure in the rebel camp. This first reverse caused strife in the rebel camp, and Malumba was murdered by one of his lieutenants. On the 12th June Henry joined Sannaes, and resumed his close pursuit of the Batetelas, who were now aware of the Belgian advance. It was not, however, for another month that he came into close contact with them, and, as he wished as far as possible to have all the advantages of a surprise, it was only on 15th July 1897 that he delivered his attack on the camp of the mutineers. The first detachment encountered was quickly overthrown, but then the blacks resumed the attack, and it was only after a desperate struggle that they were vanquished with a loss of four hundred killed. In his official report the young officer wrote:—

"Our attack was delivered at sunrise, after a silent and unsuspected night march. The Batetelas made their general attack in return at seven o'clock. This, made by

troops very superior in numbers, was so impetuous that our first line gave way. It required the heroic example of all the whites and of our best black officers to arrest the assailants, who continued to advance in superior numbers. I seized this moment to order all the trumpets to sound the charge. Then all the whites set an admirable example of courage and devotion by rushing at the enemy, and drawing our soldiers after them. The mutineers gave way little by little to flee in all directions, after three hours' bitter struggle. The pursuit could not be carried on for more than half an hour, because the troops were exhausted, having been on their feet for twenty hours, and some of them had not tasted food for forty-eight hours."

Besides the loss of four hundred men the Batetelas lost five hundred Albini rifles, one hundred other guns, and over twelve thousand cartridges. The consequences of this success were that the mutineers were broken up into several bands. One of these, numbering two hundred men, under a leader named Saliboko, escaped this engagement, while the other bands, disorganised and disheartened by the reverse in which they had participated, scattered throughout the region, and became less and less formidable. After his signal success Commandant Henry was obliged, by the exhaustion of his men and his supplies, to return to his base of operations,—but he had done his work; and so well had he done it, that the power of the mutineers might be regarded as broken by his single-handed operations.

At the same time that these results were obtained by Commandant Henry, Baron Dhanis had firmly secured the line of the Lualaba, and rendered it impossible for any considerable body of the mutineers to get across that river. An active pursuit then began of the relics of the band that mutinied on the way to the Nile, and the pursuit is still continued. A great number of skirmishes

have been fought, with uniform success to the State troops. The rebel bands are fewer in number and in strength. Where they counted several hundreds the total is represented in tens. They are fugitives in every sense of the word, unable to offer any serious resistance, and thinking only of evading capture by a precipitate flight across the forests that intervene between the Aruwimi and Manyema. The end cannot be far distant. Not one of the revolting Batetelas has succeeded in reaching the tribal home, and it is correct to say that the mutinous soldiery have already paid the penalty of their treachery and breach of military discipline.

The Batetela mutinies naturally caused the Sovereign of the Congo State a lively concern for the permanent interests of the State, as well as deep regret for the loss of many brave officers. The following letter gives eloquent expression to these sentiments :—

“BRUSSELS, 16th June 1897.

“SIR,—The agents of the Independent State of the Congo have been rudely tried of late. Their ranks have been subjected to the cruel and repeated blows of fate. Associating myself with the tokens of unanimous regret that their sad losses have occasioned, I wish to pay a homage of gratitude to all those who have valiantly sacrificed their lives in the performance of their duties.

“Like every great cause, that which we serve on the Congo has had many martyrs. To the trustees of their virile traditions I wish to address a few words that spring from my heart.

“The mission which the State agents have to accomplish on the Congo is noble and elevated. It devolves on them to continue the development of the work of civilisation in the centre of Equatorial Africa, under the inspiration of the principles enunciated in the Acts of Berlin and Brussels.

“Placed in front of primitive savagery, struggling with sanguinary customs dating from thousands of years, they have to gradually bring them to reduction. It is necessary for them to subject the population to new laws, of which the most imperious and the most salutary is assuredly that of labour.

“In barbarous countries I know that a strong authority is needed to bring the natives, who have never been accustomed to it, under the practice of civilisation. To this end it is necessary to be at the same time firm and paternal. All the same, the native population, in a country like the Congo, is the base of the true wealth of the region. It is to assure its free expansion that the first efforts ought to be devoted.

“Our civilised societies attach rightly to life a value unknown in barbarous communities. When our directing will is planted among these races, its function is to triumph over all obstacles. The result cannot be achieved by words alone, however philanthropic their sound may be. But if, in view of the necessary domination of civilisation, it is permissible to reckon, when the necessity arises, on the means of action conferred by force, the supreme sanction of right, it is not less true that its ultimate end is a work of peace. Wars that are not indispensable ruin the regions in which they take place. Our agents are not ignorant of this. The day that their effective superiority is established, it will be profoundly repugnant to them to abuse it. For the unhappy blacks who are still under the empire of their sole traditions, may be left the horrible belief that victory is only definitive when the beaten army has been mutilated. The soldiers of the State are perforce recruited among the natives. They cannot be weaned at once from the sanguinary customs transmitted through generations. The example of the white officers' military discipline will inspire them with horror of the human trophies in which

they take pride. It is in their chiefs that they ought to see the living demonstration of this superior principle, that the exercise of authority ought in no way to be confounded with cruelty: the latter destroys the former.

“I am pleased to think that our agents, almost all volunteers from the ranks of the Belgian army, have ever before them the regulations of the honourable career in which they are engaged. Animated by a pure sentiment of patriotism, little sparing of their blood, they will be all the more careful of the blood of the natives, who will see in them the all-powerful protectors of their lives and property, the benevolent instructors of whom they had so great a need.

“Our programme for all—I take this opportunity to repeat it here to you—is the work of moral and material regeneration which has to be put in operation among a population the decay and disinherited position of which has hardly been realised. The frightful scourges, of which they seemed in the midst of our common humanity the designated victims, are already yielding little by little before our intervention. Each forward step we make ought to mark an improvement in the lot of the natives.

“In these territories of infinite extent, the greater part vague and uncultivated,—where the natives only know how to procure the meagre daily subsistence,—experience, knowledge, the spirit of invention and of European enterprise will reveal riches hitherto unsuspected. If it creates wants, it satisfies them in a still larger proportion. The penetration of virgin lands goes on, communications are established, routes are opened out; the soil delivers its produce in exchange for the varied articles of our manufacture. Legitimate commerce and industry progress. As the economical condition changes, property acquires an intrinsic value; individual and public possessions, the base of all social development, are securely

founded and respected, instead of being abandoned to the chance of the strongest.

“To this material prosperity, in which the interests of whites and blacks are clearly becoming identical, the desire to elevate themselves will soon correspond among the latter. Their primitive nature will not indefinitely resist the pressing efforts of our Christian culture. Their education, once commenced, will be no longer interrupted. It is in its success that I see the crowning of the task undertaken by us, and so admirably seconded by our priests and religious sisters. To establish a direct contact with the natives scattered over the vast basin of the Congo, has been the most urgent part of our programme to be realised. This has been done in fifteen years without the aid of any State, if not that lent by Belgium. The creation of quite a solid group of stations is gradually substituting, for the incessant savage inter-tribal warfare of village against village, a régime of peace.

“From a geographical entity, physically determined, the Congo State is become a country with precise frontiers, occupied and guarded at all points—a result almost without example in the history of colonisation, but which is explained by the concentration of all our efforts on a single field of action.

“The difficulties that we have ourselves encountered will be greatly reduced when the railway of the Lower Congo to Stanley Pool shall be soon completed.

“I make here a fresh appeal to the devotion of which our agents have already given so many proofs, so that the creation of that means of communication may as soon as possible bear all its fruit. It is that which will closely tie the Congo to the mother country, which will permit Europe, whose regards attentively follow us, to take with full knowledge a benevolent interest in our work. It is she also who will impress on our progress a speed even

more rapid and decisive, and which will soon introduce into those vast regions of the Congo all the benefits of our Christian civilisation.

“I thank our agents for their efforts, and I repeat to them the expression of my royal affection.

“LEOPOLD.

“To E. VAN EETVELDE.”

CHAPTER XV

THE STATE ADMINISTRATION

THE diplomatic measures which resulted in the creation of the Congo State, and the military achievements which established its effective power within the wide limits assigned to it by the respective conventions with its neighbours, have now been described, and, in passing in review the work accomplished in Central Africa, it is necessary to describe at some length the system of administration established for the civil government and the dispensation of justice. Before the State came into existence the executive work of the Congo Association was performed on the spot by a delegate who bore the title of Chief of Expedition, and in Brussels by a working committee presided over by General Strauch. In 1884, when Sir Francis de Winton succeeded Mr Stanley, the title of the local authority was changed from Chief of Expedition to Administrator-General. The true history of the administration commences with the formation of the State in 1885, when the Belgian Parliament sanctioned the acceptance by the King of the Belgians, of the position and style of Sovereign of the Congo State.

On the 5th October 1885 the King issued a decree constituting at Brussels the Central Government of the State, and dividing it into three separate departments. These were, (1) Foreign Affairs, and Justice, (2) Finance, and (3) the Interior, including the police of the territory

and the transport service. The head of each of these departments was known as Administrator-General—a title changed in 1891 to that of Secretary of State; and for each department there were in Brussels a regular office and staff. The first occupants of these posts were—for Foreign Affairs, Mons. (now Baron) Edmond Van Eetvelde; for Finance, Mons. Hubert Van Neuss; and for the Interior, General Strauch. In Africa the following administration was established:—The supreme authority under the Home Government just defined was vested in a Governor-General, who was assisted by a Vice-Governor-General; the administration was entrusted to District Commissioners, of whom there were twelve.

With regard to the office of Governor-General, the facts are a little anomalous. From the beginning of the State only two persons have held that rank—M. Camille Janssen and Colonel Wahis. As a rule, the highest executive authority has been the Vice-Governor-General at Boma, to whom is given the officiating title of Governor-General *ad interim*. It must also be stated that there are generally two occupants of this office—one resident at Boma and the other on leave at Brussels, who relieve one another every two years. The two present functionaries are M. Fuchs, a civilian, and the Captain-Commandant (of the Engineers), Wangermée.

Although the work had to be done in Africa, the direction and the inspiring influence came from Brussels, and it will be proper to describe the organisation of the Home Government before entering upon the details of the



COLONEL WAHIS.

local administration. Baron Van Eetvelde was specially selected for the post of head of the Foreign Department by his colonial experience, having represented Belgium as Consul-General in India, and by the evidence he had given, in that capacity, of exceptional ability which had gained for him the special notice and approbation of his Sovereign. It will be seen how well he has justified his selection for his responsible and arduous post, by the skill with which he has directed the affairs of the Congo State since its creation, and not only by the skill, but by the high ideal



COMMANDANT WANGERMÉE.

of government he has set himself to attain in a region where the conditions of life are necessarily demoralising. He has aimed not merely at improving the resources of Central Africa by encouraging such trade as existed, and by introducing new pursuits for the employment of the blacks ignorant of cultivation, but he has, above all things, shown a desire to promote their prosperity by providing a sure, cheap, and convenient dispensation of justice.

The arrangements he drew up for the prevention of the slave trade and for the absolute security of individual liberty have been described in connection with the subject to which they related; but these, although relating to the more important and pressing problem, were not different in their scope and significance to those passed in the other departments of justice and equity. Among many other public acts that have illustrated his long tenure of office must be named the improvement of communications by railway and river transport, and the establishment of a regular postal service which makes the

Congo State a worthy member of the Postal Union. To that service will be added, before long, a telegraphic system that will link Stanley Falls and the Great Lakes with the capitals of Europe. As a diplomatist Baron Van Eetvelde has shown, in several delicate and difficult negotiations, a skill no way inferior to that he has exhibited as an administrator. The phrase has been used before, but I cannot find a better to define his share in the work: Baron Van Eetvelde has been, in fact, "the soul of the political organisation of the Congo State."

In October 1891 Baron Van Eetvelde was transferred to the department of the Interior, and in 1894 he was appointed Secretary of State in a single capacity for the whole administration of the State. This change, however, will claim notice further on. The first Administrator-General in the Financial Department, M. Hubert Van Neuss, was Chief Secretary in the Finance Department of the Belgian Government, and a financier of high training and large views. His work consisted in establishing the customs system of the Congo, in devising the monetary system, in arranging the public debt, and in drawing up the instructions on which the local authorities had to act. After holding this post for five years, M. Van Neuss resigned, and, after an interval, Baron Van Eetvelde assumed the control of this department at the end of 1892. General Strauch only controlled the Interior for little more than two years, and this department, after several intermediate changes, was placed in 1891 under the charge of Baron Van Eetvelde. For a time the duties of Foreign Minister were discharged by Count de Grelle-Rogier, of the Foreign Department.

The very first task undertaken after the King's decree was to create the administration of justice, and to substitute the reign of law for the anarchy which had enjoyed immunity in Africa from time immemorial. At that precise moment the authority of the State did not exist

beyond the Lower Congo and the line of the river to Stanley Falls. A Court of First Instance was established in the Lower Congo, and held its meetings, as occasion required, at Banana, Boma, Matadi, or Ponta da Lenha. Territorial judges, for more summary process, were appointed to Leopoldville and other places in the Cataracts district, while above Stanley Pool military law was established under duly-appointed Councils of War. At Boma a Court of Appeal was also opened, competent to receive appeals and revise decisions in all cases of first instance. In civil and commercial matters the Courts of First Instance and Appeal had full powers over the whole of the State territory. Besides, a Superior Council installed at Brussels, and composed of eminent foreign as well as Belgian jurisconsults, acted as a Court of Cassation, and revised any case involving a sum of one thousand pounds. To complete the legal machinery, a Public Prosecutor was established at Boma, and he had assistants at Banana and Matadi, while he possessed the right to appoint others where he deemed necessary. In order to discharge their duties, they were instructed to keep up as close an intercourse as they could with the blacks, and their agents were invested with the authority of a police commissary. In the Lower Congo all men holding judicial posts had, from the first, to be doctors of law, or, at the least, members of a Belgian University. In the Upper Congo this degree of perfection was at first unattainable, but during the last few years it has been in general force, and all judges and public prosecutors are now properly qualified lawyers.

The reports of the Director of Justice and of the State Prosecutor show that justice is, as a matter of fact, regularly administered. To attain this result, examples had to be made. The natives yielded only slowly to the idea of a regular superior authority, and among Europeans the view that, in the eyes of the law, black men and white

men were equal needed to be assimilated. An idea may be formed on the subject of crime in the Congo from the following table, which shows the number of penal cases in each year :—

In 1886 there were	62 cases.	In 1892 there were	156 cases.
„ 1887	77 „	„ 1893	198 „
„ 1888	80 „	„ 1894	424 „
„ 1889	100 „	„ 1895	388 „
„ 1890	121 „	„ 1896	600 „
„ 1891	157 „	„ 1897	622 „

Most of these cases were for theft or assault, and the increased number of cases shows rather the efficiency of the system than the spread of crime. In dealing with the disputes between natives and natives, it would have been hazardous and premature to attempt any direct interference with the authority of the chiefs. At the same time the State functionaries were in all cases instructed to tender their good offices, and to show an interest in mastering the details of all matters in dispute. The effect of this display of interest was not long in making itself visible. The natives revealed an increasing desire to have recourse to the Belgian Court instead of to the local fetish doctor or native arbitrator. Prisons have been constructed at Boma, Banana, and Matadi, and, to prevent abuses of any kind, regulations have been carefully drawn up. Prisoners receive the same fare as soldiers, and are employed on useful public works.

In May 1897 an important change was carried out, by the suppression of military law in the Upper Congo and the extension of civil law throughout the State. An order was issued by the Secretary of State for the institution of territorial tribunals, authorised to apply the penal law to all the State residents, natives or not, and at the same time restricting the authority of Councils of War to military prisoners. In order to strengthen the position of these tribunals, the authority was vested in

the State Prosecutor to transfer the venue, in the case of serious offences committed by Europeans, from the upper districts to the Lower Congo, where public opinion would be more disposed to support the decisions of impartial justice. Serious cases were defined as being : murder, homicide, and attempts on either the lives or the liberties of the blacks. At the same time the Court of Appeal was strengthened by three councillors being substituted for one judge, and, as a further guarantee of impartiality, the councillors are of different nationalities. The president is a Belgian ; of the other two, one is a Swede and the other an Italian. All judgments of first instance can be brought before this Court of Appeal, and, as the blacks could not be expected to know their legal rights, the lower Court was required to lodge an appeal on behalf of the accused against its own decree.

As a still further precaution against acts of tyranny at the expense of the blacks, a Commission for the Protection of Natives was instituted. Its task was to notify to the judicial authorities, and if necessary to the Governor-General, all facts, of whatever nature, that were injurious to the natives, or acts of violence of which they were the victims. As members of this Commission, missionaries of every religion or sect were chosen. Finally, the President of the Court of Appeal is charged with the task of making a tour of inspection from time to time, with the view of ascertaining whether the local tribunals were being properly conducted, and with due regard for the principles of equity. While these elaborate and extraordinary measures were taken to safeguard the indigenous population against acts of cruelty, it is right to record that not a single charge had been made by natives against any official down to midsummer 1897. This fact in itself furnishes an effectual answer to the charges made from time to time by

persons, of whom the most charitable thing to say is that they indulge in loose statements.

Before passing on to consider the civil administration, it will be appropriate to briefly refer to several departments of a more or less judicial character. One of these records the births and deaths and takes notes for the establishment of identity. Marriages are also performed by civil functionaries nominated for the purpose. Another regulation relates to rights of property, which practically did not exist before the State acquired possession of Central Africa. Europeans held their lands by virtue of some agreement with the native chief, and when they left their holdings they practically surrendered and lost them. Occupation was therefore the real right of possession. One of the first acts of the State was to give European occupants of lands the same legal rights as they would possess in their own country. These lands were registered and subjected to cadastral survey. Simplicity was the main object to be attained in all matters relating to property; and with this view, the Torrens Act, which had worked so well under similar conditions in Australia, was taken as a model. Formality was reduced to a minimum, and the transfer of property from hand to hand was made as easy and expeditious as possible. The certificate of registration passed current as easily as a payment to bearer. In the Upper Congo every non-native had the right to take up land to the extent of a thousand acres, provided it was done in a peaceable way by agreement with the natives, and his title would then be recognised on the basis of occupation. In this way the establishment of religious and commercial settlements was facilitated, and a commencement made in what might be called the pacific occupation of the country.

One of the points on which the members of the Berlin Conference laid much stress was, that the new State should become a member of the Postal Union and arrange a

postal system on that basis. This had to be done among the very first steps taken by the new administration, and it imposed a considerable strain on its resources. The reduced rate at which letters and parcels had to be carried entailed a considerable loss to the revenue; and the fact that in the early years of the State's existence there were no regular steamers between the Congo and Antwerp, imported an element of uncertainty and risk into the carriage of mails beyond the control of the State authorities, because the only available boats were those sailing from Portuguese ports. In the first five years a quarter of a million of letters, etc., were despatched, and only eleven claims were made on the subject of missing letters, and the majority of these were proved to be baseless. A great improvement was effected in 1893 by the establishment of a monthly steamer between the Congo and Antwerp, and now the mails are carried with remarkable punctuality and despatch.

The commencement of a regular civil administration on the Congo may be said to have begun under the auspices of Sir Francis de Winton. He was there too short a time to do more, however, than distribute the work to be done in each department and to assign the officials their posts. In August 1885 he was succeeded by M. Camille Janssen, to whom belongs the credit of having organised the whole of the local administration. He carried out on the spot, with equal energy and ability, the policy sketched out and propounded by Baron Van Eetvelde in Brussels. On the 17th April 1887 M. Janssen was raised to the rank of Governor-General, and he was the first to hold that office and title. Soon afterwards he returned to Europe, but after a brief interval he resumed his position as Governor-General. On his departure the supreme authority was directed by several members of the administration without that title, and it was not revived until July 1892, when Major (now Colonel) Wahis

was appointed the second Governor-General of the Congo.

For purposes of administration, the Congo territory was first divided into twelve districts. Their names were Banana, Boma, Matadi, Cataracts, Stanley Pool, Eastern Koango, Kassai, Equator, Ubangi-Uelle, Aruwimi-Uelle, Stanley Falls, and Lualaba. In 1892 a portion of the territory dependent on Stanley Falls and Lualaba was detached and formed into the new administrative district of Katanga. Two further districts, called the Ubangi Exploration and the Camps of the Itimbiri-Uelle, were also organised, and in 1898 the Nile territory of Lado was converted into the sixteenth district of the State.

In these divisions the actual work of administration was performed by officials termed commissaries of districts. These functionaries are themselves divided into three classes, and below these are three classes of assistants: sub-commissaries of district, clerks of the first class, and clerks of the second. The responsibility for the good order of the district and the behaviour of the staff rests with the commissary. If owing to his carelessness or neglect the State should suffer any pecuniary loss, he is expected to make it good out of his own salary. The first and most important clause in their instructions is to maintain friendly and amicable relations with the natives, and to take such a part in the quarrels between tribes or their chiefs as may be most conducive to peace and harmony. They are also instructed to do everything in their power to improve the mode of life of the blacks, to soften their customs, and, above all, to put an end to human sacrifices. Among their other duties may be named that of providing the transport and engaging the porters needed not only by the Government, but by merchants. The necessity for this task to be performed by public functionaries is obvious, because the engagement of porters by irresponsible individuals might easily

result in a state of veiled slavery. The terms on which porters are engaged are clearly defined by official authority, and are no more susceptible of deviation than those relating to the engagement of men for the Public Force.

In 1892 a new grade of the service was formed, in the appointment of Residents to the camps of the greater chiefs. The first of these officers was indeed appointed at a much earlier period, when Tippu Tip ruled at Stanley Falls; but the necessity for increasing the number was established by the expeditions on the Mbomu and the Uelle, which were marked by treaties of alliance with the Sultans of the north. Among their other duties may be mentioned those of judge on the Council of War, of which the ruling chief would also be a member, and they were also vested with the powers of a judicial police. The senior Resident was called Resident-General, and the Residents are divided into three classes. As time goes on, this class of administrators will be entirely superseded by the commissaries, who may be termed the regular Civil Service of the State.

The Finance Department is distinct from either the judicial or the administrative, and represents one of the chief reforms of M. Camille Janssen. It is placed under the control of a Director of the Finances, and superintends the service of land revenue and sales, of the taxes, as well as of the accounts of the Government. The postal service is also attached to this department. The Land Department is organised in all its details, and includes geometricians for the cadastral survey as well as guardians of landed rights. Notarial offices dependent on this department have also been opened at Banana, Boma, Leopoldville, and New Antwerp.

The land revenue will form an increasingly important element in the resources of the State as civilisation progresses. It is therefore well to record the principles

laid down by the Government for the regulation of the land question. Lands may be divided into three categories. First, those held by the native population. These lands are registered according to local custom and usages. The native right of property in land is to be regarded as conterminous with occupation. On lands being abandoned they become the property of the State, and cannot be purchased or dealt in without the knowledge and sanction of the Governor-General. The second category of land is that which has become the property of the whites. For the title to be valid it must have been registered by one of the land officials, and the owner must hold his certificate, which is sufficient proof of possession. The lands so possessed also figure on the cadastral survey, and the obligations imposed on the holder are duly set forth, and include the payment of a direct land tax. The holder has to bear the cost of the survey, and to carry out such instructions in the marking off or enclosing of his lands as the land officials may give.

The third category of lands are those known as Domain lands. They are the property of the State, and the net revenue belongs to it. They are either let to third parties or worked by the State agents. A remarkable clause in the leases is, that they do not carry any rights of property under the soil. What hidden mineral wealth there may prove to be, belongs to the State. It is also noticeable that the domains are only leased or sold to individuals in districts where the cultivation of caoutchouc, or india-rubber, has been handed over to private persons. Having made a reference to the mineral wealth of the State, it is pertinent to state that mines can only be worked by concessions specially granted by the Sovereign. An exception to this rule is, however, made in the case of the blacks, who are allowed to continue such primitive mineral operations as they have been

accustomed to do ; but this right is restricted to the lands they occupy, and they do not possess the power to sell or transfer it. The significance of this arrangement is, that it left the natives in the undisturbed possession of their rights. The chief wealth of the domains consists in their forests, and these are not to be touched without the express authority of the land officer or the commissary, who places the value on the trees before they are cut down. Lastly, it may be mentioned that the office of the Intendant checks all the accounts with regularity and in the closest detail, in the respective localities as well as at the head centres of the administration.

The right of the State to the Domain lands has been clearly established by precedent, and by the expressed opinion of the most eminent juriconsults on the specific right of the Sovereign of the Congo to deal with them in the manner that has been adopted. Bluntschli, among the greatest and most generally recognised authorities on international law, has declared that "land susceptible of being the object of ownership, and of a character to become so as the consequence of occupation, but not being so, is to be regarded as vacant ;" and again, "The State is the owner of all non-occupied land, and no portion of it can be appropriated without the authorisation of the State." This system has been generally recognised in the British Colonies and in the United States of America, the two countries that have had the greatest experience in the occupation of undeveloped and unoccupied regions. These principles were strengthened, in the case of the Congo, by the opinions given on the specific case by Mr. Westlake and Sir Horace (now Lord) Davey, among English authorities ; by Messrs. Van Berchem, Van Maldegham, and De Paepe, of the Belgian Bar ; and by the eminent Russian juriconsult, Professor De Martens, of St. Petersburg.

To sum up on the objects and work of the Congo

administration. Its first task was to put down the slave trade and cannibalism. The complete success achieved in these directions has been recorded. The next objects were to secure the practical liberty of the black population, and to prevent their becoming, through either their own ignorance or the designs of other people, the domestic slaves of anyone. To accomplish this, it was necessary for the State, not merely to stand as an intermediary between the employer and the employed, but to regulate all the details of the engagements made between them. With this object in view, the system of registration was introduced and carried to a degree of perfection unequalled anywhere else. With the view of training the blacks in agriculture, for which centuries of tyranny, disturbance, and insecurity seemed to have unfitted them, child colonies have been established in accordance with what may be termed a happy thought of the King. The plan has worked well, and the blacks have risen in the estimation of the Europeans as well as in the scale of happiness. One pretty aphorism has been coined to illustrate these new sentiments. "To know the black a little is to alienate him from you, to know the black much is to draw him towards you." At the same time, it must be recorded that the administration has been largely assisted by the voluntary and devoted efforts of the missionaries of all the Churches and of the Sisters of Charity. It is said that fifteen different sects are represented by these missionaries, but out of a total of two hundred and twenty-three there was a solid phalanx of one hundred and fifteen Catholic missionaries, all of whom were Belgians. Sanitary precautions have been taken, and the natives have been taught, as far as possible, the simple principles of hygiene, including the indispensable character of vaccination. The efforts made by the State to restrict the area open to the traffic in alcohol, which by the latest royal decree is now limited to the lower part of the Lower

Congo west of the Mpozo, or, in other words, of Matadi, complete the services the administration has sought to render to the blacks over whom its sway has been established.

I will conclude this chapter in the eloquent language of Baron Van Eetvelde, when summing up for his master the work done by the administration :—

“ It has struggled with success against the slave trade, restricted the traffic in spirits and firearms, protected and encouraged the missions without distinction of creed, assured for all flags free navigation in the inland waters. It has created no tax, no public charge, which does not affect the Europeans equally with the natives. Its customs tariff excludes all differential treatment. It has established no transit dues, nor placed any obstacle in the way of the circulation of merchandise, whencesoever they may have come. It has assured commercial liberty as understood by the Berlin Act, in guaranteeing the liberty of exchange and other mercantile transactions. It has guaranteed the security and stability of the rights of private property, by giving them in its land regulations a legal efficacy, and by placing them beyond dispute by the adoption of a cadastral system calculated on that in vigour in the Australian Colonies. . . . The Independent State, conscious of its situation and its rôle, seeks no conquests. It confines its ambition to the perfecting of its internal organisation, to extending its machinery, to consolidating its authority, to facilitating the exploitation of the natural resources of its territories, to improving the lot of the populations. It is to these numerous cares that it devotes itself with ardour, without letting itself be turned from its object by views which would not harmonise with this programme.”

CHAPTER XVI

THE REVENUE AND TRADE OF THE STATE

THE subjects that we have now to consider are of a more practical character than those that have principally occupied attention up to the present point. The nature of the work to be performed in Central Africa, and the manner in which the Congo State has met its obligations, have been set forth in detail. It remains to show the resources which enabled it to discharge the onerous duties imposed upon it by its own position and the expectations of the Powers, and which are still available for its continued existence as a separate State or as a Belgian colony. Another point of scarcely less importance is to ascertain whether the trade of the region and the development of its produce justify the view that the Congo State will prove a source of wealth to its possessor, or only a barren acquisition.

At the commencement it is proper to record the fact that, practically, the whole of the cost of the first ten years' work on the Congo was borne by the King of the Belgians, who devoted a large part of his private fortune to the realisation of his great and noble scheme. The founding of the colony in those years entailed an expenditure of more than £1,200,000 on the part of the King, which will never be recovered. This large amount represents the outlay needed to give the enterprise a start. Without it the project of a Central African dominion would have died of inanition, as no one else

felt disposed to support it, or realised the opportunity afforded for energetic and well-directed enterprise in that region. How complete was the ignorance or incredulity, the clear course left for the King showed; and how limited seemed the hope of profitable trade in this region may be judged from the simple facts that the revenue for the year 1886, the first year of the State's existence, was less than £3000, and that the exports, chiefly ivory, were only £70,000. The Congo Association, at the moment of its being merged in the State, possessed only thirteen stations, and, out of two hundred and fifty-four foreigners on the Congo, only forty-six were Belgians. From every point of view, there seemed at that moment little tangible return for the, comparatively speaking, immense sum the King had sunk in the Congo, and it must be remembered that the subsequent negotiations with France entailed the severance of what were then thought to be the most promising districts, in which much of the outlay had for that reason been made.

The very first task before the new administration of the Congo State was to procure the means of carrying on its work, and to devise sources of revenue where none before had existed. But it was not until July 1890 that the State acquired, by the Brussels Act, the right to levy taxes and impose customs dues. The year 1891 was therefore the first in which it could be said to have received any regular revenue. Before that, the sums received were the result of commercial operations, or the spoils of war; and how small they were may be judged from a glance at the tables given a few pages further on. Before 1891 the highest sum obtained from these sources was £20,000, and in most years it was less than half that sum-total. Obviously, the work could not be carried on without funds, and it was equally clear that the King's fortune would not last for ever. The Brussels Conference gave the authority

for the enforcement of a tariff, and the details of the arrangement carried out will be described in due course. But in 1890 a more immediate remedy was needed, and recourse was had to the Belgian Parliament, which sanctioned a loan to the State of twenty-five million francs, or one million sterling. The sum was not all advanced at once, but in the following form :—One fifth of the amount, or £200,000, was handed over at once, and the remaining £800,000 was to be paid in ten annual instalments. The State was thus provided with a revenue of £80,000 for the period of ten years, and during that period the loan was to be free of interest. At the same time, the King notified his intention of continuing his support to the State, in the form of a personal subvention of a million francs. From these two sources the State commenced its financial career with an assured income of £120,000. Small as this sum will appear in comparison with the responsibilities incurred, it represented for five years the greater half of the revenue of the State.

Among the sources of revenue first provided were the export duties on ivory and india-rubber. These were fixed, after agreement with the neighbouring States of France and Portugal, at ten per cent., while vegetable products were only charged at the rate of five per cent. Import duties were established at the same time as follows :—On arms, ammunition, and salt, ten per cent. ; merchandise of any kind, six per cent. ; on spirits, fifteen francs per hectolitre at 50° of the centesimal alcoholmeter ; boats, machinery, and useful articles for industry and agriculture were exempt till May 1898, and thereafter paid only three per cent. The registration fees, the house tax, the levy on the boats that carried on traffic on the Congo, represented what may be called direct taxation ; of the same character were the fees paid on the engagement of blacks as servants, labourers, or porters. The

sale of lands brought in other sources of revenue besides the sum paid for the purchase. The registration fees and other payments were a legitimate contribution to the Exchequer. The value of land is now fixed, (1) for land for factories or commercial purposes, at one hundred francs the hectare, when situated in the Lower Congo up to Stanley Pool, and (2) at a rate of two thousand francs the hectare, with a minimum of three thousand francs, when situated in the interior beyond Stanley Pool. When taken up for agriculture, land is sold at ten francs the hectare, whatever its situation is.

Special regulations were framed for mineral concessions; but as these have not yet produced any revenue, it is unnecessary to consider them in any detail. The forests, which one day must constitute a great source of wealth, are now left untouched as far as possible, in order to enable them to recover from the ravages committed during several centuries of ceaseless warfare. They are only cut down to provide the steamers with fuel, and a fee of from £20 to £40 is exacted, according to the tonnage of the vessel.

The tax on caoutchouc was fixed at twenty-five centimes the kilogramme, equivalent to four per cent. on the value in Europe, but this moderate tax was only to remain in force until the opening of the railway through the district of the Cataracts to Stanley Pool. This being now achieved, a decree was issued in February 1898, announcing that from the 1st September in the same year there would be a supplementary tax of twenty-five centimes the kilogramme, raising the impost to eight per cent.; and this increase was justified, not merely by the increased facilities and diminished cost of transport, but by the increased value of caoutchouc itself. Another decree of the same date provided for the payment of a licence of £200 by all persons wishing to establish a caoutchouc establishment on the domains. Neither of

these new sources of revenue have yet come into practical operation, and they form one of the principal channels from which a largely increased State revenue may be expected in 1899. When the new plantations of coffee and cocoa begin to be productive as sources of revenue, the day will be in sight when the State will be able to carry on its own administration without any extraneous or extraordinary assistance. In the meantime it may be noted that the proportion of the State-raised revenue to the expenditure has risen from only four per cent. in 1886 to 68·21 per cent. in 1897.

The following tables will place the whole of the financial situation of the Congo State before the reader at a glance :—

TABLE I.

SHOWING THE PROPORTION OF STATE RECEIPTS TO EXPENDITURE.

Year.	Receipts.		Proportion.	
1886	Francs	74,261	representing	4·87 of Expenditure.
1887	„	200,755	„	10·61 „
1888	„	268,306	„	9·21 „
1889	„	515,094	„	16·06 „
1890	„	462,602	„	14·69 „
1891	„	1,319,545	„	28·97 „
1892	„	1,502,515	„	31·75 „
1893	„	1,817,475	„	33·40 „
1894	„	2,454,778	„	33·25 „
1895	„	3,600,000	„	47·00 „
1896	„	5,887,404	„	56·83 „
1897	„	9,183,360	„	68·21 „

TABLE II.

NET REVENUE OF THE CONGO STATE.

Year.			Year.		
1886	Francs	74,261	1892	Francs	1,502,515
1887	„	200,755	1893	„	1,817,475
1888	„	268,306	1894	„	2,454,778
1889	„	515,094	1895	„	3,600,000
1890	„	462,602	1896	„	5,887,404
1891	„	1,319,545	1897	„	9,183,360

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TABLE III.

THE BUDGETS OF THE CONGO STATE.

Year.		Revenue.			Expenditure.
1891	.	Francs 4,554,931	.	Francs	4,554,931
1892	.	„ 4,731,981	.	„	4,731,981
1893	.	„ 5,440,681	.	„	5,440,681
1894	.	„ 14,949,444	.	„	7,383,554
1895	.	„ 6,004,764	.	„	7,370,939
1896	.	„ 7,002,735	.	„	8,236,300
1897	.	„ 9,369,300	.	„	10,141,871
1898	.	„ 14,765,050	.	„	17,251,975

TABLE IV.

GROSS RECEIPTS OF CONGO STATE, OR TOTAL REVENUE.

Year.	
1892	. . . . . Francs 4,800,896
1893	. . . . . „ 6,664,615
1894	. . . . . „ 7,754,532
1895	. . . . . „ 8,116,268
1896	. . . . . „ 10,359,900
1897	. . . . . (not available)

TABLE V.

TOTAL EXPENDITURE OF CONGO STATE.

Year.	
1892	. . . . . Francs 4,764,086
1893	. . . . . „ 6,841,783
1894	. . . . . „ 8,619,152
1895	. . . . . „ 8,116,268
1896	. . . . . „ 10,359,900
1897	. . . . . (not available)

The most important element in the life of a State is, however, not its revenue, but its trade and industrial or agricultural activity. A Government can give an artificial size to the revenue it raises, or it can impose excessive taxes, which diminish, and in the end exhaust, the resources of the country; but there are no such means of creating a fictitious trade. The value and significance of the Congo revenue are to be measured by the evidence afforded of growing trade and developed resources.

Just as the sources of revenue were limited when the State came into existence, it was equally clear that the produce of the country covered no great range when the question of tapping its wealth was approached by those who had undertaken the responsibility of its government. There were only two articles, practically speaking, available for export. One was ivory, gathered from elephants' tusks and hippopotamus' teeth; and the other was "the black ebony," which it was the sacred mission of the State to erase for ever from the list of African exports. The natives were also too lazy, too easily satisfied, or too inexperienced in labour, to make any effort to develop the territory they possessed, or to turn to account the natural riches that lay ready to their hand. Their energy, perhaps also their capacity, was exhausted when they had planted a little manioc or maize, or perhaps batatas, which could be cultivated without further effort than scratching a grateful soil. The indifference of the negro led to the general conclusion that he was hopelessly lazy, incapable of settled labour, and that his co-operation would be useless in the task of developing the Congo basin; whereas the truth was, that he was ignorant because no one had taught him, and that he was indifferent because there was barely a chance of his enjoying the fruits of his own labour. In such circumstances, it was not surprising that the ideal existence was the one which provided the barest necessities of life with the least exertion.

The success of the steps to be taken for the development of the Congo region depended, in the first place, on the capacity of the black races to be attracted to a regular settled existence, and to the necessary application to field labour, essential for the development of its resources in vegetable products. Much doubt was expressed on the subject, and those who took an unfavourable view of the matter were more confident in their opinions than the others. But when it is remembered what African labour

had done in a condition of slavery in the West Indies and in the Southern States of America, it seems strange that any doubt should have been felt as to how the negro would work on his own land in a state of freedom. In the early stages of his social advancement and education, it is true that he required direction and enlightenment, but of his readiness to learn, and of his keen perception of the change in his lot, there never was any doubt. For many years the capacity and willingness of the natives to labour in the fields or in the forests, on the lakes and rivers, or along the trade routes, have been accepted as undoubted facts, about which it is no longer possible to hold opposite opinions. Over and above their capacity for manual labour, the blacks have developed a keen commercial spirit, which bears out all that so close an observer as David Livingstone said of the possibility of raising the intelligence and intellectual perceptions of the negro to a level nearer the European.

The acknowledged superiority of African ivory in colour and hardness over Indian provided it with a sure and ready sale in the European markets. The supply of dead ivory—that is to say, of ivory actually in possession of the blacks—was immense, and, as they attached no special value to it, ivory was obtainable in sufficient quantities, by the barter of fancy goods, beads, or such articles of apparel as gratified the native taste. At the same time, all explorers and agents of the State agreed in stating that the herds of elephants in the interior were numerous, and promised a supply of live ivory for an indefinite period. As a precaution against the extermination of the pachyderm, the King has, however, prohibited elephant shooting, except by special permission, which is rarely granted. The exports of ivory from the Congo State in 1895 were valued at 5,844,640 francs of Congo produce, and 6,334,280 francs of general trade—that is to say, of French and Portuguese as well as Belgian territory. In 1896 the

corresponding figures were 3,826,320 francs and 4,853,160 francs ; and in 1897, 4,916,480 francs and 6,004,180 francs. The export of ivory may therefore be correctly described as steady, but as unlikely to exhibit any great increase. On the other hand, the supply is known to be enough to prevent any marked decline, and the precautions, taken in good time, will avert the waste or exhaustion of the available stores of ivory.

The present condition and future prospects of the Congo State depend, not on its old sources of wealth, practically limited to one article, but on its new. The extraordinary fertility of the soil, watered by the Congo and its affluents, justified the expectation that the cultivation of vegetables, grains, and tropical plants would be possible, and likely to be crowned with exceptional success. Like the Nile, the Congo leaves a rich deposit, which requires a minimum of labour to become suitable for cultivation. In the eastern and south-eastern provinces of the State, Manyema and Katanga, the region is of extraordinary natural fertility, and the climatic conditions are far superior to those of the Lower or even the Middle Congo. Here, when the means of communication have been improved, it is safe to predict, will be large and prosperous colonies of Europeans living near the Equator, under conditions as favourable as those in Ceylon, and more favourable to the health of white men than those prevailing in Java. The richness of the soil, the suitability of the climate, and the adaptability of the negroes for manual labour, and especially as agriculturists, were the preliminary discoveries and facts on which the development of the capabilities of the Congo region was systematically and scientifically taken in hand.

But the first product of the State was a vegetable growth, supplied not by the art of man, but by the bounty of nature. This was the caoutchouc, or rubber-bearing liana—*landolphia florida*—which was found in practically

limitless extent, embracing the largest trees to their summits, and justifying the appellation, used by M. Droogmans,



AN AGRICULTURAL STATION OF THE STATE.

of "the vegetable boa of the Congo region." The natives knew something of its use, but their primitive methods of collecting it threatened the extermination of the plant.

They were content to make an incision in the liana, and to gather the fluid in a kind of ewer, or, more often, to collect it in their hands, rub it on their body, and to carry it in this way to the market, where it was rubbed off with sand. The chief mischief that attended this primitive practice was, that the liana was left to die. At the commencement, then, the State authorities prohibited the blacks from making any incision in the lianas, and took the most effectual steps in their power to enforce their orders.

Before these salutary measures were taken, the lianas in the Lower Congo had been practically destroyed by the improvident methods and ignorance of the blacks, but on the Upper Congo and several of its tributaries, especially the Kassai, the lianas are practically countless, and the supply, with reasonable precautions in gathering the harvest, is quite inexhaustible. A number of regulations, with the view of husbanding and developing so important a source of wealth, have been drawn up. The State authorises the gathering of caoutchouc in the greater part of its territories in the Upper Congo. Further orders have been issued from time to time to ensure the proper and more skilful collection of the caoutchouc harvest, and, among these, that the liquid can only be extracted from the stem. The tax imposed by the State has been previously mentioned; but the natives have the option of paying one fifth of the quantity they collect. An important matter in connection with the caoutchouc harvest is, that it is so easily effected that it can be done by women and children. The quantity of caoutchouc annually exported from the Congo has attained large proportions, which have made it a successful competitor with that received from Brazil. In 1886 the export was only 159,000 francs. In 1892 it had risen to 625,356 francs; but its enormous development has taken place in the last three years. In 1893 the total reached 1,000,000 francs, but in 1895 it

was 2,882,585 francs ; in 1896, 6,586,730 francs ; and in 1897 it took its place as the leading export of the Congo State with 8,311,900 francs ; and in these figures, only the actual produce of Congo territory is included.

Among the other chief natural products of the Congo must be named palm oil and palm nuts. In 1895 palm oil was exported to the value of 935,658 francs ; in 1896, 770,532 francs ; and in 1897, 650,206 francs. In 1895 palm nuts were sent abroad to the extent of 1,242,898



TIMBER OF THE CONGO.

francs ; in 1896, of 1,143,605 francs ; and in 1897, of 1,098,879 francs. In this direction it is not permissible to look for any large increase in the productiveness of the region ; and the development of the other revenues of the State will perhaps make the palm exports occupy a still minor place than the third, which it has now filled for some time on the customs returns. Leaving aside the minor exports, such as copal, arachides, and timber, the last of which is increasing (having risen from twelve to seventy-five thousand francs in two years), we pass from

the three chief articles in the existing trade and produce of the Congo to those which have made in the last few years a modest appearance in the official statistics, and which are full of promise. In the first rank of these must be placed coffee and cocoa ; but tobacco, the sugar cane, the vine, and even the tea plant, are not to be excluded from the possible profitable products of Central Africa.

The cultivation of coffee was naturally suggested by



A FOREST ON THE CONGO.

the fact that the coffee tree was found growing wild in many parts of the Congo region, but, unlike caoutchouc, it is essentially artificial, and demands the greatest care. In the first place, the site of a coffee plantation has to be carefully selected. The plant requires a damp soil and a well-shaded position, while at the same time great heat is needed for the production of the blossom. Four to six years are required to develop the shrub, which attains at maturity an altitude of from ten to thirteen feet. The shade is skilfully obtained on the Congo by planting

banana trees among the coffee shrubs, as shown in the accompanying illustration.

Nevertheless, after the lapse of a certain time, in order to prevent the plantations being stifled, as they



A COFFEE PLANTATION.

reach and sometimes surpass the height of the banana trees which have protected their growth, these are advantageously replaced by trees of a certain height, and fulfilling numerous conditions. Among these conditions

may be named rapidity of growth, that they do not exhaust the soil, that they do not give too compact a shade, that they reach a certain height as soon as possible, and that they have some intrinsic value of their own. Among other essences employed on the Congo, the State has prescribed for some time past that an experiment should be made with the Ireh tree, which was thought might be employed for this purpose; and this the more confidently, because its juice might at the same time be exploited for the production of caoutchouc of real value.

The coffee trees are planted at intervals varying according to the kind and variety; as a general rule, the estimate holds good of five hundred trees to an acre of plantation. Intercalary cultivation—a method on which planters themselves are by no means unanimous—is not attempted on the Congo. A coffee plantation begins to be productive in its third year; its produce varies according to the nature of the soil, the conditions under which the plants have grown, and the category to which they belong. The opinion expressed by experts on the samples of Congo coffee is very favourable. The taste and aroma have, as a rule, been found exceedingly good. It has been remarked that some of the berries were occasionally too large.

Having obtained these encouraging results, the State has taken in hand the systematic cultivation of coffee. Each station has been endowed with a coffee nursery, and the cultivators are encouraged by rewards and other stimulants to turn the land given to them for cultivation into a coffee plantation. It was with the same object that the State passed, on 21st November 1896, an order obliging the recognised chiefs in the districts of Aruwimi and Stanley Falls to cultivate either coffee or cocoa on their waste lands. On its side, the Government engaged to furnish the necessary seeds; to allow them an

indemnity, to be fixed by the district commissary, for each coffee or cocoa shrub on its attaining two feet in height; and to pay them fifty per cent. of the value of the coffee produced—the value to be fixed by the price on the Belgian market, less the cost of transport.

The justification of this obligation to cultivate coffee or cocoa is simple and sufficient. The suppression of the slave trade and the maintenance of internal peace have deprived the chiefs of the greater part of their resources, but at the same time the State retained its indefeasible right to their contributions towards its support, in taxes of some kind or other. When those chiefs were invited to pay tribute to the State, and replied that they had no means of doing so, the Government made answer: "You must pay something, but the State will give you the means of paying it." The most promising and advantageous project for both parties was to apply the measure passed by the decree of 21st November 1896, already cited, to all the territorial chiefs. This was done on 30th April 1897 by fixing the gratuity awarded on a tree attaining the necessary height at one penny (ten centimes), and by recognising their rights of property in the plantations they cultivated, which might be transmitted to their successors, subject to the assent of the State.

As may be deemed clear from this statement, the State takes upon itself the provision of the seeds or shrubs destined for the native plantations, and, over and above an indemnity fixed for each coffee or cocoa tree, the chiefs are made equal participants in the result of the operation.

Neither of these articles yet figure prominently in the statistics. Cocoa did not appear in the list till 1896, and coffee only for the quantity that passed through from foreign territory. In 1900 the result of the experiment will be clearly established, but the plantations on the

chiefs' territories may not be fully productive for a year later.

In the meantime the evidence obtained and the reports received leave no room to doubt that the experiment will be a great success. How great, it will be best to leave time to tell its own tale. Tobacco, the sugar cane, and the vine are also among the vegetable products under trial on the Congo, but they are in a less advanced stage of experiment than coffee, and it is not possible to speak with equal confidence of their chances of success. Vegetables for domestic use and fruits of all kinds are produced in abundance, but whether they will ever form an article of export may be doubted. The following tables will show the growth and the extent of the special and general trade of the Congo State:—

TABLE I.

THE SPECIAL COMMERCE OR EXPORT OF ORIGINAL PRODUCE FROM THE CONGO STATE.

Year.	Year.
1886 . Francs 1,772,864	1892 . Francs 5,487,632
1887 . „ 1,980,441	1893 . „ 6,206,134
1888 . „ 2,609,300	1894 . „ 8,761,622
1889 . „ 4,297,543	1895 . „ 10,943,019
1890 . „ 8,242,199	1896 . „ 12,389,599
1891 . „ 5,353,519	1897 . „ 15,146,976

TABLE II.

THE GENERAL COMMERCE OR TOTAL EXPORT FROM THE CONGO STATE.

Year.	Year.
1886* . Francs 3,456,050	1892 . Francs 7,529,979
1887 . „ 7,667,969	1893 . „ 7,514,791
1888 . „ 7,392,348	1894 . „ 11,031,704
1889 . „ 8,573,519	1895 . „ 12,135,656
1890 . „ 14,109,780	1896 . „ 15,091,137
1891 . „ 10,535,619	1897 . „ 17,457,090

In connection with the external trade of the Congo, it is worthy of note that by far the greater proportion of

* Second half only.

it is carried on with Belgium. Out of the whole general trade of 17,457,090 francs in 1897, 12,882,901 francs



CONGO STATE NOTE (100 FRANCS).
Winter & Sons, Limited, London, Antwerp.

entered Belgium. The Netherlands took 2,348,097 francs; and England, which at one time had a greater

trade on the Congo than Belgium, had sunk to 339,840 francs. The same tale is told with regard to the importa-



OFFICIAL STAMP (100 FRANCS).

tions. Belgium possesses in that direction a not less pronounced lead than in the exports. Out of a total of

22,181,462 francs of imports, 16,272,028 francs come from Belgium—a result sufficient to show that the Congo has already become a considerable outlet for the parent State. Among the imports England figures for 2,593,247 francs. The great bulk of the trade to and from the Congo under a moderate tariff, and with the principles of free trade in vigour, goes to the benefit of Belgium. This increase has been on an ascending scale. In two years Belgian trade with the Congo has trebled, while English has decreased by twenty-five or thirty per cent.

Of the mineral wealth of the country nothing is yet known with absolute certainty, and therefore it will be best to pass over this part of the subject with the mere observation that travellers and surveyors have affirmed that in many parts, and especially in the south-eastern region of Katanga, there are clear traces of gold and of coal. A number of Belgian companies have been formed for the exploitation of the Congo region, and in these a considerable amount of capital has been invested with generally favourable results. The success of those trading with the region of the Upper Congo has been more marked, and is based on surer conditions for expansion than those interested in the Lower Congo, and the improvement in communications must tend to increase the prosperity of those engaged in the region above Stanley Pool. The State benefits by all these private undertakings; and in some of them, such as the Katanga Company, it possesses, by the terms of the concession, a direct contingent interest. From these sources the State must soon derive some increase in its revenue; and as new enterprises are undertaken, in consequence of the success of those already existing, the advantage accruing to the Government will become more marked and considerable.

One of the principal factors in the commercial success of the Congo State will undoubtedly be the ability of

Europeans to live and enjoy reasonably good health within the territories of the State. This is a very vexed question; and if the conditions of life in the Lower Congo, at Banana, Boma, and even Matadi, applied to the Upper Congo, a gloomy view would be justifiable. But the state of the case is not so bad as a mere reference to the somewhat high rate of mortality at Banana would lead the casual observer to conclude. The evidence is conclusive that, with a reasonable amount of care, and by the



PIER AT BOMA.

observance of some simple precautions, a European can enjoy on the Upper Congo just as good health as in Belgium, while for European colonies on a large scale the table lands of Katanga are suited in an exceptionable degree.

Improvements in food, clothing, and habitation, as well as a stricter application of the laws of hygiene, have already produced an effect on the bills of mortality. Sixteen doctors in the employment of the State look after the health of the different stations, on which they

issue a report every six months. A Hygienic Commission sits permanently at Boma, and reports every three months. The chief cases of illness occur, all the doctors agree, among the new arrivals. A period of acclimatisation appears in nearly every case to be necessary, and the consensus of opinion is that, for this, one year is sufficient. On the other hand, the rapid passage of new arrivals, which the railway makes possible, to the more salubrious regions of the upper river, seems to be a simple and satisfactory remedy for the evil. The most careful and systematic rules have been drawn up for the guidance of the new-comer in the Congo State, and men of science declare that the strict observance of these simple precautions will reduce the risk to life to a minimum. Among these regulations figure a strict abstinence in respect of strong liquors, and the adoption of a more substantial early breakfast than is the practice on the Continent. The following table of deaths among the agents of the State will furnish the reader with the materials for his own opinion.

TABLE OF MORTALITY OF AGENTS OF THE CONGO STATE.

Year.	Number of Agents.	Deaths by Accident, including Wars.	Deaths by Illness.		Mortality per 1000.	
			At a Station.	While on Expeditions.	Total.	By Sickness alone.
1885	160	2	7	...	56	43
1886	133	3	4	...	53	30
1887	152	1	1	...	13	6
1888	177	...	7	...	40	40
1889	226	...	4	2	58	58
1890	292	1	5	1	24	21
1891	408	5	13	15	80	69
1892	492	11	21	15	90	73
1893	628	8	12	21	65	53
1894	703	8	18	34	85	74
1895	758	28	24	11	83	46
1896	939	8	31	24	67	58
1897	1073	51	37	21	68	54

These figures give an average of sixty per mille, or six per cent., and supply an effective answer to the allegation in Mr. Consul Pickersgill's report, that "of every ten whites nine are either buried or invalided within three years." If these totals and averages are compared with those that have been experienced by other European States in their task of absorbing new countries and winning them over to civilisation, it will be found that they are much under instead of above those in different regions of the world. In the Cameroons the average was over one hundred and fourteen per mille in the four years 1890 to 1894, in German East Africa eighty-seven per mille, in the Niger territory seventy-five per mille, and in French Cochin China fifty-three per mille. In former years the Dutch garrison in Java died out in less than four years, and the rate of mortality among the servants of the East India Company in the last century, apart from deaths in operations of war, was far higher than that incurred by Belgium on the Congo.

The question of the healthiness of the Congo region is one that the Belgians can face without yielding to discouragement, and perhaps the optimists will find reassurance in the fact, which the pessimists cannot explain away, that six hundred Europeans, including one hundred and twenty-five English and sixty-four Americans, have, without any State compulsion, taken up their residence on the Congo, and principally on the admittedly less healthy part of it west of Stanley Pool. The region is far healthier than many other European colonies; and the mortality is certain to diminish in a natural manner as the country is effectually reclaimed, when the need for hazardous expeditions will cease, and as the conditions of health are more accurately appreciated and scrupulously complied with. Taking all these facts into consideration, a mortality of six or even seven per cent. among the agents of the State in the first period of the existence of

a new territory does not furnish any reason to shake faith in the future of the Congo State, or to raise a doubt that Central Africa will be another of the great producing regions of the tropics, like Brazil and Java, Ceylon and India, Indo-China and the West Indies.

CHAPTER XVII

RAILWAYS AND TELEGRAPHS ON THE CONGO

At different periods reference has been made to the fact that the utility of the Congo as a navigable river was very greatly diminished by its being unapproachable from the sea on account of the cataracts, thirty-two in number, with a total fall of one thousand feet, which intervened between Matadi and Stanley Pool. Several attempts, and many more suggestions, had been made to overcome this natural difficulty; but no practical remedy had been discovered when the State was founded, and the whole transport between the upper and lower rivers was carried on on men's backs at great expense, and with still greater uncertainty and delay. These obvious facts led Mr. Stanley to express the conviction that he did not attach any value to the Congo without a railway from Matadi to Stanley Pool; while Belgian travellers and administrators regarded it as of the first necessity, in order to draw to the coast the wealth of the interior, as well as for the development of the interior of Central Africa itself. At a very early stage of its existence, everyone came to recognise that the future of the Congo State depended chiefly on the construction of a railway that would turn the cataracts, and supply a sure and rapid means of transport between the ocean port and the commencement of navigation on the upper river.

In 1887, when the State was not yet two years old, a convention was concluded between it and the Belgian

society known as the "Compagnie du Congo pour la Commerce et l'Industrie," granting the latter certain rights and privileges of a very generous nature if it would undertake to build the railway. A preliminary survey, entrusted to Major Cambier and a large staff of competent engineers, was undertaken by the company, and, two years after the first agreement, a definite arrangement was concluded, by which a distinct Congo railway



MATADI—GRAND PLACE.

company was formed for the execution of the task in accordance with Major Cambier's estimates and surveys. On 29th July 1889 the Belgian Chamber passed a vote, that of the capital of this company, which was to consist of twenty-five million francs, the Belgian Government might subscribe two fifths, or ten million francs. The other fifteen millions were offered to public subscription, and were, as a matter of fact, subscribed chiefly by Belgian investors.

The machinery and funds necessary for the commencement, at least, of this railway being thus provided, a brief account may be given of the accomplishment of a task which presented many exceptional difficulties, and required nine years of ceaseless effort and enterprise to accomplish. Major Cambier, in his first estimate, had computed that the line could be constructed, and interest paid on the capital pending construction, for a million ;



DINING-ROOM AT LEOPOLDVILLE.

and if the result showed that the sum had to be doubled, it must be noted that all similar works have cost more than the original estimate, and that the total cost of this line represents a rate of less than £10,000 a mile, which, considering the difficulties encountered and overcome, must be pronounced exceedingly low.

The route selected for the railway from Matadi to Stanley Pool was originally four hundred kilometres in

length, but it was found possible in the course of construction to reduce this to three hundred and ninety kilometres, so that the length of the line in English measurement is as nearly as possible two hundred and sixty miles. Matadi, the point of departure, is made accessible by a new iron jetty, more than one hundred feet in length, to ocean steamers of considerable tonnage, and the terminus, Ndolo on Stanley Pool, lies a little south-east of Leopoldville, under the shadow of Mount Leopold. At Ndolo quays and docks have been constructed, to make it the great inland port for the Congo flotilla. In the selection of the track for the line the engineers were hampered by the proximity of the Portuguese frontier, which at several points is only three miles distant. This fact prevented the making of the *détour*, which would have turned the chief natural obstacles lying in the path of the engineers in the great rocky mountain of Pallaballa, which itself forms part of the great Crystal range, that is the western rampart of the Central African plateau. As that barrier could not be turned, and as the cost of tunnelling was prohibitive, considering the limited resources of the railway company, other methods had to be adopted, and, after a period of doubt, and even despondency, they have signally triumphed.

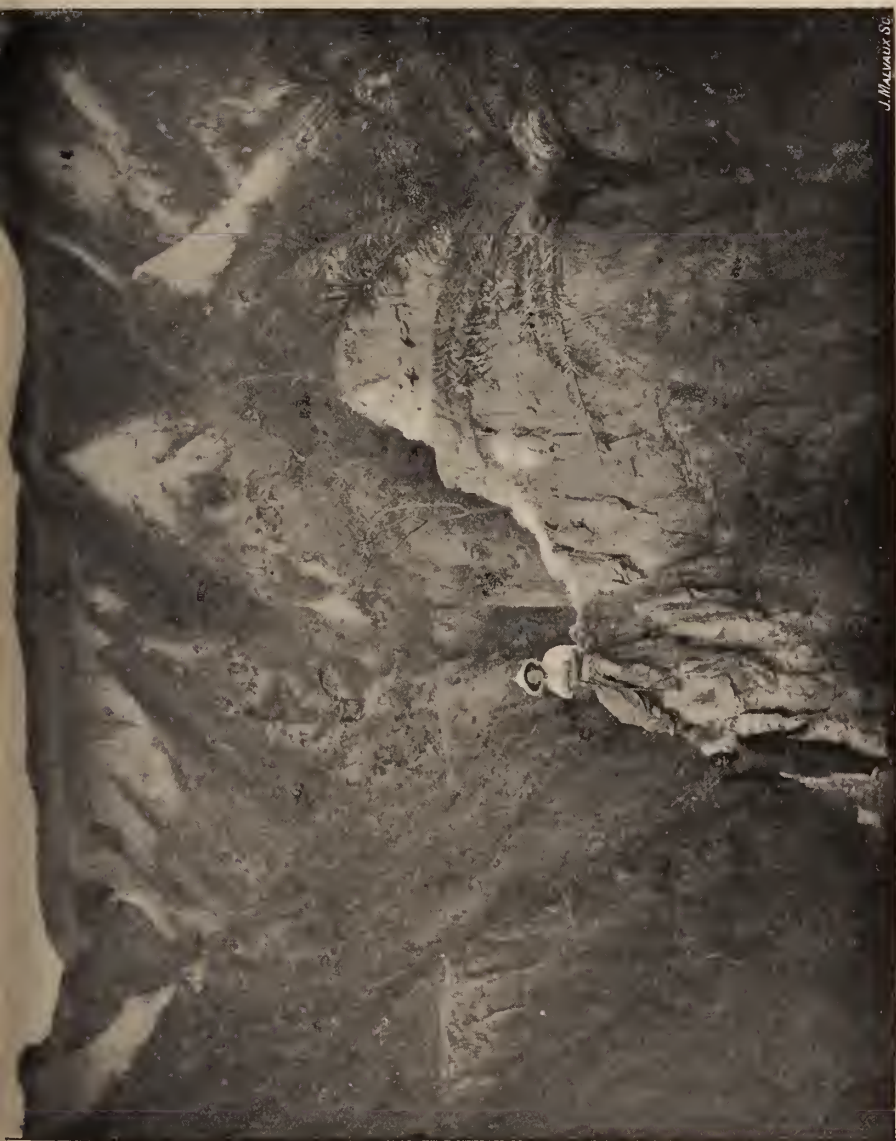
The principle adopted was that the line should follow as closely as possible the trend of the land, and accommodate itself to the sinuosities of the country, instead of attempting to triumph over them in preserving a straight line. The first section of the line out of Matadi to the eastern side of Pallaballa is exceedingly tortuous, and has been described by a traveller along it as "marvellous and fantastic." The track through the Pallaballa Mountain is itself nearly eighteen miles in length, and here the way had to be made through the mountain by a succession of dynamite explosions in the hard rock. In this manner the line was carried over the summit of the Pallaballa, and four years were occupied in the construction of the first

twenty-six miles of the railway, which included this portion. During this period despondent views were expressed about the undertaking, and the delay led some to declare that it would never be achieved. The engineers worked indomitably, and those who had set their hands to the task never lost faith in the result. When the Governor-General, Colonel Wahis, opened the first section, on 4th December 1893, although no more than one tenth of the distance had been traversed, the essential difficulties of the task had been overcome. The following description of this part of the route, from the pen of a correspondent of the *Mouvement Géographique*, who witnessed the ceremony, gives a graphic picture of the more difficult and picturesque section of the railway :—

“The train, on leaving the station of Matadi, passes in front of the works of the State and the Belgian and Portuguese commercial establishments, and debouches immediately by the neck of the Guinea Fowls (Col des Pintades) into the Leopold Ravine, which it crosses by a bridge of sixty-five feet. It follows for a few minutes the right bank of the ravine, and is thus on the bank of the Congo, whose magnificent panorama is suddenly exposed. Here commences the sensational part of the journey. For four miles, first alongside the Congo and then alongside the Mpozo, the way is hooked on to the side of the strong rock of Matadi. It mounts by a gentle incline, having on its right a perpendicular rocky wall, in some places seven hundred feet high, and on its left, in the foreground, the river rolling in rapids, and in the background the grand landscape of the right bank, with Vivi and Mount Leopold. At the sixth kilometre, where the Mpozo flows into the Congo, and before entering the valley of the former river, the view is exceedingly grand. At this point the railway is two hundred feet above the river—the Congo, enclosed in a gorge, rolls its tumultuous waters with extreme rapidity, as they have

just made the descent from the Falls of Yellalla. On the left, to the north-east, the scenery is quite wild. It is equally so to the south-east, while the water is closed in in the narrow valley of the Mpozo. It was in these parts, at the very commencement of the work, that the difficulties were the greatest. From the Leopold Ravine to the bridge of the Mpozo, or for over four miles, the platform of the line had to be cut in terraces on the side of an immense rock of hard stone, across the thick equatorial vegetation which encumbered every ravine. Beyond the Ravine of Sleep (Ravin du Sommeil), and after passing the ancient camp of Matadi-Mapembe, commences the famous ascent of Pallaballa. At the tenth kilometre the line attains a height of three hundred feet, while at the seventeenth it has reached nine hundred feet, or a rise of six hundred feet in four and a half miles. Beyond this the line traverses the Ravine of the Devil to reach the summit of the mountain, one thousand seven hundred feet, and in the course of this part of the work several bridges have had to be thrown across the intervening chasms or ravines. The whole of this part of the journey is really emotional. The scenery is dramatic, works of skill succeed each other every minute, the perspective modifies itself to each of the numerous curves the road makes at every passage across the ravines. The railway ever ascends, hanging on to the mountain, suspended in places from three hundred to five hundred feet above the bottom of the Devil's Ravine. The engine blows with force to the very moment of reaching the station of Pallaballa. Here the truly interesting portion of the journey is over. The great difficulties, the long slopes of ascent at a maximum incline, recur no more."

This description will explain the appellation of this part of the country by the title of the Switzerland of the Congo. After reaching this point, the work proceeded at a greatly accelerated pace. Four years were spent in laying down forty kilometres, but in the next two years and a half



J. Maynard St.

THE PALLABALLA ROCK.

one hundred and fifty kilometres were laid, and half the whole distance was traversed. At the same time, the discovery had been made that the line would cost a great deal more than had been estimated, and the actual expenditure at this point had reached thirty-eight and a half million francs, or over half a million sterling in excess. In order to provide the necessary funds, fresh powers were granted by the Congo State and the Belgian Government, and a tripartite convention was signed, by which power was given to the two former to buy up the railway from the company. In 1898 the period when this right could be exercised was postponed for another ten years, as the delay in the completion of the railway had proved greater than anticipated, without any blame attaching to the company. The further cost of the last two hundred kilometres of the line amounted to rather more than twenty million francs, bringing up the total outlay to nearly sixty million francs.

In addition to the difficulties in traversing the Pallaballa Mountain, the engineers encountered considerable trouble in bridging the five or six rivers that flow through this district to the Congo. Of these, the Inkissi was broadest and the most difficult to bridge, and the first structure thrown across it was swept away, thus causing much loss in time and money. The bridge finally thrown across is a steel bridge, and it is suspended between masonry parapets of great strength, constructed on the opposite sides of this exceedingly rapid river. Other bridges of importance cross the Kwilu, the Gongga, and the Mpozo. There are ten intermediate stations, of which Tumba, the administrative centre, is both the half-way house and the most important. The trains are timed to do the whole journey in twenty-four hours, but it is arranged that the journey shall be broken at Tumba, and in this way it will occupy two days. The

fares for the through journey have been fixed at five hundred francs for a first-class ticket, and fifty francs for a second-class, while goods will be charged about five-pence a pound.

During the year 1897 great progress was effected, and before its end only thirty kilometres remained to complete the line. These were effected by the 16th March 1898, and on that date the iron horse steamed into Ndolo. The final completion of the line and its opening for through traffic were consummated by an official inauguration on the 6th July, when a grand banquet was given at Leopoldville to the foreign representatives by M. Fuchs, the *ad interim* Governor-General. Special representatives were appointed by the Powers interested, and a large number of Belgian and other journalists went out to describe the ceremonies accompanying this auspicious event. All these visitors to the Congo were entertained as guests of the State and the Railway Company. Colonel Thys, the managing director of the railway, organised the expedition, and the fine ship *Albertville* was specially prepared for the conveyance of the party to and back from the Congo. The King was specially represented by General Daelmann and the Mayor of Brussels. M. Buls not only was present at Leopoldville, but, in order to give his fellow-citizens satisfactory evidence that life was supportable on the Equator, he extended his tour to Stanley Falls. In the course of his inaugural address M. Fuchs dwelt on the essential need of the railway to the Congo, and called attention to the practical value of the King's work. Among other speakers was Baron von Danckelman, the German representative, who extolled the colonising efforts of the Belgians, and dwelt on the friendly relations between the Congo and its neighbours.

In this manner, after nine years' labour, and a keenly contested struggle with the difficulties of nature, the great defect in the position of the Congo State has



THE LUFU BRIDGE (CONGO RAILWAY).

been removed. It is now possible to convey backwards and forwards in two days the wealth of the interior, and the appliances of civilisation to the interior, where formerly three weeks were needed for the transport. It is also not only a saving of time, but of cost, and a sure and reliable method has been substituted for a doubtful and insecure one. Much loss was formerly incurred by the impossibility of engaging porters at the moment they were wanted. This risk is now eliminated from the calculations merchants in the Congo region have to make on their investments. But the advantages brought by the Congo Railway to the State are far from being confined to the trade of its territory. Its construction simplifies the development of the interior. It will enable the State to send the material for the telegraph, for the river and lake flotillas, for the new railways needed to develop the most promising region under its sway, expeditiously and at a reasonable cost. It will also admit of the rapid conveyance of all new-comers to the Congo to a more salubrious station, so that they may pass through their period of probation and acclimatisation under favourable conditions. This will tend to diminish the sickness and lower the death-rate referred to in the last chapter. The nearer the inner parts of Africa are brought to Europe, the higher will be the tone prevailing there among the responsible officials; and the railroad, with its lieutenant or complement, the telegraph, will do more to promote good government on the Upper Congo or in the still remoter districts of the Uelle and the San-kuru than the most perfect code of laws or the strictest injunctions of the authorities in Brussels. From every point of view, the railway was essential to the welfare of the Congo, and its construction marks what must prove a new epoch in the future of the Independent State. It has also accomplished its first and more

obvious mission "in advancing the standard of Progress and Labour" in Central Africa.

The port of Ndolo, which is of equal importance as the terminus of the railway and as the commencement of river navigation, has been specially prepared for the rôle it has to play in the future. M. Dumont, a Belgian engineer, carefully examined its capabilities from every point of view before it was selected for the purpose, and his report showed that by some simple dredging operations it could be converted into a useful port. It is situated a little distance from the lake, and is approached by a narrow channel, which, after flowing up to Ndolo, continues back to the lake, so that it has an entrance and exit from and to the Congo. The current is not felt in this water passage, and Ndolo is completely sheltered from the force of the winds. Quays for lading and unloading have been constructed with a metal floor resting on piles, and these, when finished, will extend for several hundred yards. All the necessary material for repairing ships will be collected here; and at Kinshassa, the fortified islet protecting this port as well as Leopoldville, a special slip has been constructed for the launching of the large stern-wheel steamers that were described in the chapter on the Congo River. The first of these was launched in connection with the inauguration ceremonies of the Congo Railway. The situation of Ndolo as a port was greatly improved by the blowing up, by dynamite, of some rocks at the entrance of the channel, and, as time goes on, no doubt many other improvements will be effected in a place which promises to be the Liverpool or Antwerp of the Upper Congo.

The accomplishment of the Congo Railway has at once stimulated and facilitated the construction of other necessary railways in the interior of Africa. A description has been given of the value of the Congo and its affluents as navigable routes into the interior; but railways

are needed to supplement their utility, and the completion of the line from Matadi to Stanley Pool has rendered them feasible by greatly reducing the cost of sending the necessary materials to the upper river. A decision has been arrived at by the Government of the State to prosecute these further enterprises with energy and without delay. They promise to furnish a solution also of the difficult labour problem as to what is to be done with the labourers on the Matadi-Ndolo Railway. A labour question on the Lower Congo will convey to the reader an idea of how things are advancing in this region; and where it was difficult nine years ago, on the commencement of the line, to obtain a single labourer, there are now thousands of black navvies dependent on such public works as these for their means of livelihood. Another large group of black labourers in the porters has to be provided with work in some form or other; and although it may be hoped, for their own welfare and that of the State, that the majority will be drawn into agricultural pursuits, some portion at least will seek employment on the new railways.

The necessity existing for new railways in the interior of the State is, of course, not so great as in the district of the Cataracts, but there are several lines for which an immediate necessity may be pleaded, and, what is more to the point, they hold forth good promise of justifying their construction by success. Of these the railway to the Uelle, and that to Manyema, Urua, and Katanga, are the two most important and promising. Political considerations, and the present highly interesting position of affairs on the Upper Nile, invest the former undertaking with the greater importance for the time being, but the latter railway, or rather railways, are not less necessary, and hold forth a greater promise of reward. Of course the two lines named do not represent the only directions in which the State will have to construct railways, but

they are those that lie within its programme for the immediate future. The Uelle Railway, in particular, will surely be taken in hand with no more delay than the preliminary arrangements require.

Under these circumstances, the following sketch of these projected enterprises will supply the reader with the essential facts relative to two important new agencies for the propagation of trade and civilisation in the Dark Continent.

On the 6th January 1898 the King signed a decree sanctioning the construction of a railway in the valley of the Uelle, and the expenditure of three hundred thousand francs by the State in the preliminary surveys. It is well to establish the fact, in the first place, that the line has a justification in more practical considerations than political problems. The rich basin of the Uelle, covering an area of one hundred and fifty thousand square miles, was described by Emin Pasha, whose authority could not be disputed, as an immense field open to traffic and industry, where the extraordinary wealth of the region awaited the effort of the exploiter of virgin soils. In this region, coffee, tobacco, and the sugar cane are actually cultivated by the natives without trouble, and, as they are by instinct agricultural, they only need better methods to attain a degree of prosperity that will justify Emin's phrase in calling the Uelle region the granary of Equatoria.

These considerations turned the scale in favour of the Uelle route as the best for reaching the north-east districts and the Nile. There were other considerations in support of this view. The principal counter suggestion was in favour of the Aruwimi, but the Aruwimi passes through a region much less thickly peopled than the Uelle. The Uelle also provides a more direct and easier route to Redjaf, while at the same time there are important parts of this river that are utilisable for navigation. We must

not be misunderstood. The river is really of use, chiefly for local traffic on the native canoes; but on the Itimbiri River steamers can proceed from the Congo as high up as Acuetana. The proposal, therefore, is first to construct a short line from Acuetana to Eringa—both on the Itimbiri—and to continue it across country from Eringa to the Panga Falls on the Uelle. Above the Panga Falls the Uelle is navigable to Niangara, and consequently the short line from Acuetana to Panga will connect two important water routes. Panga is also in connection by water route with the Ubangi, although for a considerable part of the distance it is only navigable for canoes. The total distance of the line from Acuetana to Panga is two hundred and fifty-five kilometres, or, say, one hundred and seventy English miles.

This comparatively short section would constitute the Uelle Railway, properly so called, but after it has been achieved will arise the question of how it is best to continue it to the Nile; and then will come the point to be decided, whether the Panga-Niangara section of the Uelle should be regarded as a permanent section of the line, or whether it will be best to continue the line without a break from Acuetana beyond Panga, without a break to Redjaf. There is hardly room for serious doubt that the latter course will be adopted, although it signifies the construction of a railway of six hundred and sixty miles. There are, as it happens, many local considerations that will reduce the cost and facilitate the completion of such a line. The country is almost perfectly flat. There is plenty of wood and lime. The tribes of the Uelle make excellent bricks, and they are themselves capable of performing regular work. The local resources will consequently largely aid the operations of the railway contractors. There is therefore every justification for hopeful views with regard to the Uelle Railway and its continuation to the Nile.

The second railway, or rather railways, is intended to do for the regions of the Manyema, Urua, and Katanga exactly what the line just described will do for the north-east. The provinces of Manyema, Urua, and Katanga are the three richest and most promising in the State. Manyema is watered by the main course of the Congo, navigable, with several breaks, to the Devil's Gates above Kassongo, Urua by the Lualaba, and Katanga by the Lufila. The whole of this region is of extraordinary fertility; and Katanga, where copper mines have been found to exist, will in all human probability turn out a second Transvaal. Much of this region is served by admirable water routes, but there are gaps in the navigation that diminish their value. The radical purpose that the new lines have to accomplish is to remove these defects and to supplement the service of nature. With this object in view, the first thing to be done is to connect Wolf Falls on the Lubefu, at the head of navigation, by the Kassai-Sankuru-Lubefu, with the point of resumption of navigation on the Upper Congo at Nyangwe Falls. This line would cross the intervening river of the Lomami, at a little distance above Bena Kamba. A second railway would branch off from this line at the Lomami and reach the Devil's Gates, at the termination of the navigable stretch of river above Nyangwe. From the Devil's Gates a further line would be required to reach Lake Tanganyika. The situation would then reach unbroken river navigation to Wolf Falls on the Lubefu, and thence unbroken railway communication to the Devil's Gates in the first place and the lake in the second. The difference in time between the present moment and what will then be the case can be judged from the following statement. Under existing circumstances, four months is considered a good average period for the journey from Antwerp to Tanganyika. When the railway is made as far as the Devil's Gates it will take

thirty-nine days, and when to the lake itself only thirty-five days.

Above the Devil's Gates there is a splendid stretch of navigable water on the Lualaba, and the railway will make it easy to convey a steamer to this part of the river. When that has been done, Katanga will be brought within six weeks of Antwerp. A railway will at some future date have to be constructed, through Katanga, but the need for it is not so pressing as for the lines named from the Lubefu to the Congo. It will come within the range of practical operations a little later on, but its precise direction can safely be left over until the Lubefu-Nyangwe and the Lomami-Lualaba (Devil's Gates) lines have been constructed. The former is in length only two hundred and fifty kilometres or one hundred and sixty-five miles, and the latter three hundred and seventy-five kilometres or two hundred and fifty miles. There are, moreover, no serious difficulties to be overcome in either of these directions. The further railway programme of the State remains, therefore, clearly defined and easy of accomplishment. Several short lines are needed to establish the immediately requisite means of communication in the eastern and north-eastern districts of the State. They represent, however, a total railway construction of less than six hundred miles in the first stage of the question, and the accomplishment of this is well within the power of the Government and of the existing companies interested in the Congo.

The question of telegraphic means of communication on the Congo is intimately connected with that of the railways. It has formed the subject of several decrees since the year 1893. On the 27th November in that year it was ordered that all telegraphic or telephonic lines could only be laid down by the special decree of the Sovereign, and that the State could construct these lines on or across private property wherever they deemed

it to be necessary. It was also decreed, on the same date, that a telegraphic line should be made at the cost of the State from Boma to Matadi, Leopoldville, Stanley Falls, Manyema, and Tanganyika, and that the necessary sum for the construction of the first section was to be included in the budget of 1894. In July 1895 the wire had reached Matadi, and in September 1896 Tumba, the capital of the Cataracts district. It was then to be continued *pari passu* with the railway, and reached Stanley Pool soon after the first engine, and some months before the date of the official inauguration.

On the 18th February 1898 a second decree was published, ordering the construction of branch telegraph lines from the main line to Tanganyika—to Redjaf on the one side, and Katanga on the other. At the same time, the conditions were made known under which concessions would be made to individuals or companies for the construction of telegraphs or telephones, and preserving for the State complete control over the lines, and in every other respect safeguarding its legitimate rights.

The practical difficulties in the way of laying telegraph wires across Africa claim brief comment. Many persons thought that the best and easiest way would be to lay a cable in the bed of the Congo; but a more careful examination of the question showed that a cable would be too dear and too heavy, while there was, moreover, no reasonable probability of being able to launch on the river cable-laying steamers. The cable proposition was no sooner examined than it had to be dismissed. The next plan was to lay the wires underground; but the difficulties arising from the forest, the character of the margin of the river, and the extra labour it would entail, rendered this mode impossible. An aërian wire was therefore the only practical mode remaining; and it has been adopted, with equal success and economy. The wire will be made of phosphorised bronze, with steel posts seven

metres in height, and placed at intervals of one hundred and fifty metres. The cost of the line to Tanganyika is estimated at three million francs, and of this sum eight hundred thousand francs figure in the budget for 1898.

The task of constructing these telegraph lines has been



BRIDGE AT BOMA.

entrusted to Mr. Mohun, a consul of the United States in Belgium, who was with the Belgian forces during the Arab campaign. He has five electricians under him, and is accompanied by a military escort under Captain Verhellen. It is hoped that the lines will be completed by 1900.

It is also to be noticed that the telephone lines have been laid alongside the telegraph wire from Boma to Matadi, and thence on to Stanley Pool. They have been in working order as far as Tumba during the last three years.

These facts will show the reader what considerable progress has been made in all branches of the Communication Department, and that we are on the eve of still more important changes in this direction in the Congo region than that effected by the railway to Stanley Pool. The State has been much hampered in its operations by the want of a few short inland railways and of telegraphs. Its difficult task has been rendered more difficult by the slowness with which it could move stores and men, and also by the months of time needed to send news from its remote possessions on the Nile and Tanganyika. The measures indicated will remove these impediments, and place the State in an improved position to execute its work. At the same time, the inner regions of Africa will be furnished with the means of developing the wealth that lies dormant in their bosom, until capital, intelligence, and well-directed human enterprise shall make it fructify for the general good.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE PEOPLES OF THE CONGO STATE

REFERENCES have been made repeatedly in the course of the preceding pages to the character of the negro race generally, and to some of the principal tribes of Central Africa specifically, but a more precise treatment of this branch of the subject will not be out of place, as the future of the Congo region depends as much on the character of its inhabitants as on its capacity for cultivation. It is difficult, if not impossible, to state with any degree of confidence what the population of the Congo State is, and, in assuming it to be thirty millions, one is only taking a mean figure among conflicting estimates. But this population is, it must be remembered, the attenuated total left by internal warfare, the Arab slave raids, and the practice of anthropophagism. Before a very long period has elapsed, the State will surely possess a black population, accustomed to ideas of legal right, sanctity of contract, and individual security, that will not be less than one hundred millions in number. That may be a serious prospect for the rest of Africa; but the Congo State has only sought to discharge its obvious duty in establishing tranquillity and justice, and in putting down the worst practices of barbarism. Whatever the consequences, the task is in hand, and cannot be laid aside. At some future epoch the black race may be called upon to take its part in the solution of problems gravely affecting the progress of humanity, but for the moment

this prospect is in every way too remote to arouse any real apprehension.

It is well, perhaps, to give prominence to the fact that the negro has many good points, and that, as Livingstone said, there is no reason *per se* why he should not in the course of ages attain a mental intelligence that would place him somewhere on a level with his white brother. Without going so far into the future, let us merely say that the Belgian officers have come generally to the opinion that "the less one knows of a negro the more he is alienated from you, the more he is known the more he is drawn towards you." The two following anecdotes will do something to support the view that he is capable of real attachment and devotion ; and it is well to show the reader, at the very commencement, that the black has his good points in a not less marked degree than the whites.

Among these, devotion to a particular officer or leader is perhaps the most notable. When Chaltin was engaged on one of those expeditions which have made him the hero of the Belgian forces on the Congo, he owed his life to the self-sacrifice of Moio, one of his black lieutenants, who in an ambuscade covered his chief with his own body, and died pierced by hostile spears. Van Kerckhoven was another officer who commanded the devotion of his men. When some of his followers on his first expedition heard that he had come back for a second, they hastened at their own expense to Boma, and when they saw their old officer they exclaimed, "Here we are, master! We were told you had come for a long and hard expedition. We have already served three years with you. Here we are again! Do you wish to have us?" But perhaps the most striking story of all was that—already narrated, but which will bear repetition—of the servant and cook, who, after the return of his master, a Belgian officer, to Europe, became so distressed

at the separation that he declared that he could not live without his master. The master was in Brussels; the black servitor in Africa, without any means of performing the journey,—but he worked his way to Marseilles, where he arrived without a sixpence in his pocket. He there engaged himself as a cook, and when he had saved the exact sum of his ticket to Brussels he hastened to his goal. On reaching the Belgian capital he knew only the name of the officer he sought, but by good fortune he found him; and one morning the latter was astonished when his old black attendant walked into his room, with the remark, “Here I am, master. I could not live away from you!” There must be some brighter future for a race that can act like this; and Shanu, the most intelligent of Congolese, may not have been exaggerating when he declared to the Belgian Colonial Society, “Learn how to lead the black, and he will let his throat be cut for you!”

The population of the Congo region is divided into a large number of tribes distinguishable from each other by their tattoo marks. It is both impossible and unnecessary to name all these tribes, but the principal of them in their relations to the State may be briefly enumerated. In the Lower Congo the right bank is held by Musarongos, and the left by Bakongos, Basundis, and Bakuendas. The Batekas, who occupy the shores of Stanley Pool, are more numerous, and constitute a large part of the indigenous population west of Stanley Falls. The Bayanzis are another important tribe of the Middle Congo, and are physically one of the finest races of Central Africa. They are devoted to the pursuits of fishing and boating. In this respect they resemble the more numerous Bangalas, who share with the Batekas the predominance in number and importance of the riverain population. They are considered the most capable and intelligent race of the Congo, and they assimilate European ideas with remarkable facility. They have good memories, learn their drill

easily, and can soon acquire a smattering of French. On the other hand, they are cruel by habit, bloodthirsty in war, and cannibals always by instinct and often by practice. The Bangala is said to be the only black who can get into a passion. The Batetelas, the Mangbettus, and the Mongos are three other tribes that claim notice,



BATEKAS.

while the Dwarf races of certain districts offer a curious ethnological study. Cases of devotion on the part of the blacks have been cited; but these do not prevent its being true, as a general rule, that the negro race is inconstant and fickle, sudden in its emotions, loyal under one set of circumstances, but easily passing to treachery

under another. The most favourable view to take of them, as a whole, is that they are malleable, and that civilisation has now to win them over to her cause. It is not what they have been, or are, that we have to consider, but of what they may become in the hands of skilful and willing teachers.

Although the tribes differ among themselves in customs, and even in the degree of barbarism to which they have sunk, they are practically of the same family or stock which has been given the name of Bantou. The pure Bantou race is of extremely fine physique, and justifies Sir Harry Johnston's description as resembling, in their nudity, antique bronze statues. Their complexion in the interior is paler than that of those on the coast, but they are all more or less distinguished by their small hands and feet, and by their extraordinarily abundant heads of hair. The Mombettus, a tribe of the region between the Aruwimi and the Mbomu-Uelle, are distinguished by exceptional quickness in comprehending European methods. They never hesitate in their replies, their train of thought is clear and connected, and their manners are frank and engaging. Beyond them come the Niam Niam, or Azandés, who are, however, of the Nouba family. The Niam Niam are noted for many qualities that the Bantou races have not yet attained. They are, in the first place, loyal to their engagements, and they use a mixed diet of vegetables and game. Woman also ranks higher among them. She has not a market value, as is the case universally throughout Central Africa, and the Niam Niam does not purchase his wife. They are passionately devoted to music, and an Italian traveller has said that they will sometimes be so engrossed in playing their mandolins, that they will play for twenty-four hours without stopping to eat, drink, or sleep. All the negroes are more or less addicted to music and dancing. If they have any

religious observances, it takes this form; but the noisy drum, not the soothing mandolin of the Niam Niam, is the national instrument. It is made in every size; the drums of some tribes are even twenty feet in depth, and the noise they make can be heard for a great distance,—in some instances, it is declared, for over six miles.

It is also to be noted that the inhabitants of the Upper Congo are very much superior to those of the coast provinces, and this is to a considerable extent explained by the fact that the former have practically escaped the taint and deterioration due to the indulgence in alcohol. Again, the tribes dwelling on the banks of the rivers are notably superior to those living away from them. This superiority is due, no doubt, to the danger and physical exercise demanded of men who live by fishing and boating; but here it is sufficient to record that the best porters in the service of the State, as well as the crews and pilots of the Congo flotilla, are taken from these tribes. The Mongos, in particular, are famous for their physical strength and endurance. They constitute the bulk of the artillery in the Public Force, as well as being the best pilots of the river.

At the same time that the natives of the up-country are superior in capacity for work as well as for endurance to those of the coast, they are satisfied with a lower scale of remuneration. This is perhaps due to the cheaper cost of necessities, but it is also to be attributed to the state of the labour market, where the demand far exceeds the supply. The daily pay of the porters in the Cataracts district was, before the completion of the railway, fifteen pence a day, besides their food, which was estimated to cost another five pence. But on the Upper Congo, porters can be obtained at one penny or two pence a day, while their food costs considerably less. The dearness of labour on the Lower Congo was one of the impediments in the way of rapid commercial progress in the region above

the Cataracts, but the State has now to face a considerable social problem in the provision of some fresh opening for the forty thousand porters whom the Stanley Pool Railway will deprive of employment. This problem, serious as it may prove if treated with indifference or ignored, can be solved by the systematic development of the rich plains of Tumba and Inkissi. There grain of various kinds can be grown, and the raising of stock, which has been proved to be possible on the Congo, as well as the *petite culture*, offer a means of employment to a far larger number of negro labourers than the abolition of portage across the Cataracts district will set free. As M. Paul Conreur has said in one of the interesting letters he writes from time to time, in the Belgian press, from the Congo: "If the native is to buy our manufactures, he must be provided with the means of doing so; and labour alone, the exploitation of his own territory, will procure them for him."

The Dwarf tribes of Central Africa form rather a curious detail in Central African life (recalling what Homer and Herodotus wrote of the pigmies) than an important element in the present condition and future prospects of the Congo region. At the same time, all reports agree in assigning to these diminutive men a far higher order of intelligence than the blacks of superior physique by whom they are surrounded. There is also no doubt that all the dwarfs are of the same race, although the four principal tribes are isolated from each other in the midst of the negro population. The Tique Tique dwarfs of the Uelle and those of the Aruwimi are scarcely to be distinguished from the Wambuttis of the Upper Ituri, who have been fully described by Lieutenant Dineur. This nomad dwarf race is to be found between the 28th and 30th degrees of east longitude and the 1st and 3rd degrees of north latitude. The men average in height 4 ft., and are never known

to exceed 4 ft. 6 in., but they are physically well developed and exceedingly strong. The women are smaller in proportion, but extraordinarily prolific, the Belgian officer having been assured that cases were known of their having as many as six at a birth. They have no regular villages, but live in extemporised camps consisting of brushwood huts in the forest, moving from place to place as the necessity arises for shifting their camping ground. The Wambuttis are enormous meat-eaters, but none of the Dwarf tribes are cannibals. They are also exceedingly clean in their persons and habits. They do not bury but burn their dead, and in this, as in many other points, show a marked difference to the negroes. In fact they are quite distinct, and reveal many reasons to suspect them of being an offshoot of the Caucasian stock. As the Wambuttis are hunters by instinct and tradition, it is not surprising that they are averse to agriculture or sedentary pursuits in any form. They will not contribute, at least for many generations, to the material wealth or resources of the State. On the other hand, their physical strength, powers of endurance, and general intelligence qualify them in a very special degree for a military career, and the Congo State may discover among these Dwarf tribes a valuable and trustworthy military contingent. Their shortness of stature will not in itself suffice to disqualify them, when it is remembered what a prominent and gallant part the Goorkhas play in the Indian wars of the British Empire.

Looking at the peoples of the Congo region as a whole, we find that the black races generally are characterised by improvidence, carelessness, indifference to the future, and laziness. Some of these qualities were due exclusively to the circumstances of their life and to the conditions under which they worked. Everything, and life most of all, was uncertain. The black cloud of

slavery, fetish worship, and cannibalism hung over Central Africa. The severity of life may be judged from the fact that it was a common phrase among these anthropophagous people for a man to say to an enemy, "To-morrow you will rest in my stomach." Experience during the brief period since order and something like security have settled down over this region has shown that the black is willing to work, and that only a little supervision is needed to prevent his becoming lazy.



NATIVE FESTIVAL.

The worst that has been laid to his charge is, that during the heat of the day he will often throw aside his task and seek repose. A rational supervision, unattended by personal violence, which the black most bitterly resents, and which arouses his vindictive feelings, will provide a remedy for this not unnatural tendency.

The great motive power in Central Africa will be the spread of Christianity. To that influence we can alone look for the regeneration of the negro race; and it is possible to record the encouraging fact that it has already

begun to make itself felt, through the energetic and well-directed efforts of the missionaries. The child colonies are inculcating new principles of conduct at the same time that they are teaching the dignity and necessity of labour. Before these efforts were made, the blacks could not be said to possess any religion at all. They never prayed, the idea of invocation seems never to have presented itself to them, and it was only by suggestion that some evidence was extracted as to their belief in some future state. All was vague, repulsive, and even barbarous. The black met even natural calamities with defiance and threats. To indulge in some form of cruelty was their only idea of devotion. They had no opinion of anyone who failed to show himself superior in malice, commercial chicane, and, above all, in moral energy, to themselves. Their obedience was to be won simply by the domination of a superior capacity for wickedness in the fetish doctor and the chief under the old régime, and in the new régime it will have to be retained by firmness and consistency in maintaining a simple and easily intelligible system of law ; in other words, the rudimentary principles of justice. But the softening influence of the Christian religion will prepare the ground ; and, when the black has learned the first main truth of doing to his neighbour what he would he should do unto him, he will the more willingly pay allegiance to a system of government that does not demand a blood tribute and that respects his rights.

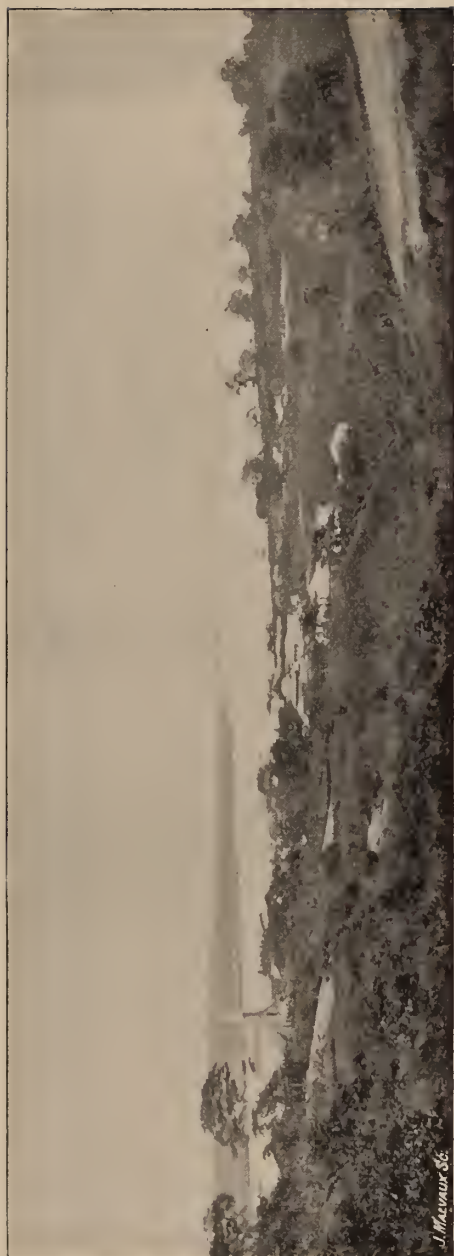
The great and supreme want of the black peoples of the Congo is employment, and this can only be secured by increased openings for agricultural enterprise. This development of the natural resources of the State is necessary for the continued prosperity, and even livelihood, of the inhabitants, as well as for the benefit of the administration. But the openings offered are not confined to tilling the ground and pursuing some special cultivation

like that of coffee. There is an unlimited field open for the raising of cattle. The natives themselves are meat-eaters, and fresh meat is for Europeans the first essential in the preservation of health; but it is always difficult, and in many districts impossible, to obtain it. But, great as has been this difficulty in the past, the growth of population that will follow the maintenance of peace, the cessation of the slave trade, and the improved hygienic principles adopted and carried out, must lead to its becoming greater. A diminution in the available supply of game has also to be expected, so that from every point of view there is need to take prompt measures to raise stock wherever the conditions are favourable. The experiments made in cattle-raising and horse-breeding, although on a small scale hitherto, have proved encouraging in their results. One of the Belgian companies succeeded in raising three thousand head of cattle, and, on the Upper Ubangi, Commandant Hanollet, who has recently succeeded Chaltin in the command on the Nile, imported thirty-five horses, twenty-six asses, and thirty-eight cows and bulls, which he distributed among the different stations of his district. Owing to the success which attended the acclimatisation of these animals, permission was given to the same officer to import, on behalf of the State, two stallions, three mares, and three donkeys from the Canary Isles, and to establish a breeding establishment at New Antwerp. The animals have become fully acclimatised, and the most sanguine hopes are entertained as to the eventual success of the experiment. What has been attempted on a small scale will have to be carried out systematically on a large, as a great deal more has to be done than merely to supply the necessary proper food for the white administrators. It is a question of providing thirty, and before long fifty, millions of people with an employment by which they may earn their livelihood as well as obtain their needed sustenance.

While the future of the Congo region depends mainly

on the success that attends the measures taken to render the black peoples happier, more prosperous and more disposed to continue in the paths of prosperity and civilisation, it must not be overlooked that, as the directing power must be long retained by the Europeans, their well-being also demands the closest attention of the State. There is every reason to say that this has been given, and that, so far as advice and assistance could ensure the complete immunity of the white staff from disease and death, nothing has been left undone. Regulations have been drawn up for diet, clothing, and housing, based on the recommendations of medical men who have gained their experience on the spot. A large part of the diet is supplied by the State, a liberal equipment allowance is made on engagement for Congo service, and the character of the houses in which the Europeans reside has been steadily improved, brick being now employed wherever possible. These improvements must tend in the course of a little time to diminish the death-rate, but it is fully admitted that a process of acclimatisation has to be passed through, which averages one year. This period can be passed through better in the interior than on the coast; and the construction of the railway, by facilitating the despatch of new arrivals to the Upper Congo, will contribute to the main object. The part that the whites have to play is essentially that of leaders and educators, in the best sense of the word. They have troublesome pupils, and they will often be discouraged by the slowness of the apparent result, but for the efficient discharge of their onerous duties they will need themselves the best health that Europeans can enjoy under the Equator. The development of the resources possessed by the Congo region, and the discovery of new, will improve the lot of those carrying on the task of government, and supply them with the luxuries that are necessities in the tropics.

Before concluding this chapter, the reader will be



GENERAL VIEW OF BOMA.

J. MALINUK SC.

interested in having a brief account of the principal towns which the State authorities have founded, and which owe their growth and importance to the fact that they are either commercial or administrative centres.

Commencing on the west, Banana, at the very entrance of the Congo, necessarily claims first notice. Here for a time the whole trade of the Congo was concentrated. In those days it was Portuguese, and the factories of many nationalities with flowering gardens gave the spit of sand on which it had been created a special brightness and an artificial importance. A British and a Portuguese Consul permanently reside there, and it still enjoys, on account of its sea breezes, the reputation of the most healthy spot on the Lower Congo. But the course of events has shifted the centre of interest farther east, and the rôle of Banana in the history of the Congo must be regarded as a thing of the past.

The next town that we come to is Boma, which is of special importance as the seat of the civil administration, being the headquarters of the Governor-General and of the Court of Appeal for the Congo. Under these auspices it has become the most European town in Central Africa. The older houses are in wood or iron, while the newer are in brick made in the Boma brickfields. The town itself is divided into two parts, Boma Rive and Boma Plateau, communication between which is kept up by the fine Royal Avenue, with its magnificent bananas and baobabs, and a tram runs free three times a day for all. Owing to the large number of officials, Boma contains a great many pretty villas, and the various public buildings, offices, churches, hotels, and factories give it an unusual air of activity and life. Nor is the varied native life less interesting than the European. There may be seen in every variety the black servitor of the white man; the black caterer of wants that the advent of civilisation has alone made known on the Congo; the black chieftain,

slowly and sometimes not creditably, but still none the less surely, assimilating himself with the ways of modern life ; and last, but not least, the black soldier, the legionary who has to carry and uphold the blue banner across a vast continent. Boma is protected by the strong fort



GOVERNMENT HOUSE, BOMA.

of Chinkakassa, below the town, which effectually commands the approaches to it and the navigation by the river. Boma will continue to be the chief outlet of the Congo region for some time to come, although it now seems only too likely to be superseded as a port by Matadi,

and as a capital, at some not very remote date, by Leopoldville.

What Boma proved to Banana, Matadi is very likely to prove to Boma. The Congo, after widening between the two places, narrows to a thousand yards at Matadi, and the current flows with tremendous force. A few years ago Matadi was a place of no importance. Its selection as the starting-point of the line to Stanley Pool marked the true change in its fortunes. The construction



SCENE ON BOMA PIER.

of an iron pier has enabled large vessels to discharge their goods alongside, and Matadi at once became the most important port on the coast. Being at the head of the railway, Matadi will inevitably become the chief outlet of the trade of the Congo region. It already shows all the external signs of prosperity, and, where twelve years ago there was only a steep uninhabited rock, there is now a rising and flourishing little town. At the same time, it must be allowed that the heat is greater and the conditions of life more trying at Matadi than at Banana, but the

advantages are such as far outweigh the drawbacks. At Matadi there is a permanent camp of the Public Force, and steps will be taken to defend it from the side of the sea, as has been done in the case of the lower part of Boma.

Leaving the three seaports we come to the inland towns; and of these, Leopoldville, the chief town of the Stanley Pool district, is the most important. In fact, probability points to the selection of this place as the ultimate capital of the Congo State. At the same time, it is deserving of note that the terminus of the Cataracts



HOSPITAL AT BOMA.

Railway has been fixed at Ndolo, a few miles south-east of Leopoldville, and that a transfer of site may be necessary unless it becomes clear that Leopoldville will grow up, or rather down, to Ndolo. The newly fortified islet of Kinshassa also commands Ndolo rather than Kinshassa. Leopoldville itself is built round the skirt of Mount Leopold, and lies amid thick plantations of bananas, cocoanut trees, and palms. Here much progress has been made in the breeding of cattle; and the necessity of supplying the wants of the numerous white residents, employés of the State and of the railway, has stimulated the effort.

Minor stations, but all possessing a future of greater promise, are Coquilhatville (the capital of the district of the Equateur), New Antwerp (the administrative centre of the Ubangi-Uelle), Tumba (of the Cataracts), Basoko (of the Aruwimi-Uelle), Stanley Falls, and Nyangwe (of Manyema). All these stations are of present and increasing importance, but here it is only necessary to refer very briefly to any of them. Stanley Falls is interesting on account of its associations, and New Antwerp because the Belgians believe that it is destined to be the most prosperous place on the upper river.

The first station at Stanley Falls was created by Mr. Stanley on the island of Usana, but a little experience sufficed to show that the site was badly selected. In 1888 Captain Van Gele removed the station to a spot on the right bank of the river, a little distance below the island. The station lies in the midst of fields that have been carefully cultivated under the direction of the State authorities, with the view of ascertaining what products can be most successfully raised on the Congo. Here were made the preliminary essays in the planting of coffee and cocoa, which justified their systematic adoption as products favourable to the realisation of the objects of the Government. The house of the former Resident and of the present Commissary of the district lies, however, on the left bank of the river, near the old camp of the Arab chief Rashid. On that side of the river, also, extensive orchards and fields of rice, manioc, and sugar cane have been planted. Occupying a position in the very heart of the State's territory, and at a convenient point for the communications with both the north-eastern and south-eastern districts of the State, Stanley Falls seems destined to acquire greater importance than ever with the lapse of time.

Still greater expectations are held with regard to New Antwerp, a name specially chosen by the King of the

Belgians for this capital of the Ubangi-Uelle district. It ranks at present, after Boma, as the most important place on the Congo. It was founded by Hanssens and Coquilhat in 1884 in the midst of the numerous and then hostile tribe of the Bangalas, and in the subsequent years it owed its expansion and increased importance to the efforts of Van Kerckhoven, who was the first to induce the Bangalas to enlist as porters. New Antwerp is situated on the right bank of the Congo, close to the 19th parallel of east longitude ; and as its houses are constructed in red and white brick, with slate roofs beneath the shade of palm groves, it presents a singularly picturesque and attractive appearance. It has been called the most coquettish little town of Central Africa. Here also cultivations of coffee, cocoa, and tobacco have been extensively undertaken, and, in regard to supplies for a considerable white population, no other station can be said to be more favoured. An extensive and well-directed brick manufactory has been established at New Antwerp ; and as the unanimous decision of all the medical authorities in Central Africa is in favour of brick-built houses, on the ground of sanitation, it follows that this industry may be largely and usefully developed. As time goes on, the stations east of New Antwerp must not only increase in importance, but many new stations will have to be founded to meet the growing requirements of trade and population.

Two chief conclusions result from this brief consideration of the peoples of the Congo State. The first is that the white population, now numbering between three and four thousand persons, is domiciled in a number of small towns, where life is already supportable, and where the conditions of life are likely to improve. The residences supplied for the accommodation of the Europeans are now adapted to their needs, a satisfactory and sufficient diet is obtainable at, certainly, the stations we have named, and the precautions that should be taken in respect of clothes,

medicine, and habits are beginning to be understood. What may be called the necessary preliminary and experimental stage of European colonisation may be said to have been satisfactorily passed through, and those residents who in the future proceed to Central Africa will profit by the experience and the efforts of their predecessors. But at the same time it is right to state that there is no immediate object to be served by the too rapid increase of the European population. A sudden influx of whites would be injurious to the best interests of the country and its peoples. All that is wanted is a sufficiency of Europeans, or rather of Belgians, to keep the machinery of government in motion, and to supply the requisite directing power for every necessary enterprise in the moral as well as the material development of the region.

The second conclusion relates to the black population of the State. There a considerable population, to which in certain districts the term dense might even be applied, has to be raised from a very low state of existence, verging almost on hopeless and irreclaimable barbarism, to something approaching the level of civilisation. The task can only be performed by a strenuous and systematic effort to elevate the well-being and intelligence of the negro races, at the same time that the strong arm of the law maintains tranquillity and forbids all acts of inhumanity. A sufficient start has been made to guarantee a satisfactory result, with a continuance of the same intelligence in direction and of the same energy in execution. The negroes are amenable to the influences that have been brought to bear upon them. They have yielded an obedience to the law, undertaken the regular daily toil that they formerly shirked, and abandoned for the greater part the savage and barbarous practices of cannibalism and fetishism. It would not be true to say that cannibalism and cruelty among the black races are dead throughout the vast region of the State, but it is true to declare that,

wherever a State station has been founded, there is a wide and ever-increasing zone round it in which such practices are no longer followed, and are no longer possible. The policy of the State is as ably and consistently carried out as it is clearly defined. The task imposed on it is a heavy one, and its strength might easily be overtaxed; but within the limitations that it assigns itself it has accomplished great and striking results, and it has never wavered for a moment, under peril and discouragement and uncharitable criticism, in its effort to reach the goal of its ambitions. Success has come so quickly and so unequivocally, that a new peril seems to some too active imaginations to have arisen on the horizon. In Central Africa the Congo State is creating an immense, contented, and law-abiding black nation. Whither will the experiment carry us? Will the world be brought face to face with a black peril in some future century, when under the blue banner with the golden star two hundred millions of intelligent and educated blacks live in prosperity and contentment? The future must decide its own difficulties, but even in the suggestion of such possibilities is involved the admission how well the State has done and is doing its work. For many generations that work will need to be continued with the same degree of excellence. The blacks are still in their infancy as a people. They may never even attain manhood; and the one essential to their continued well-being is the presence of their white educators and leaders, who supply the initiative, in which they seem to be completely lacking. If they ever do attain an equality with white men, it will be the greatest human triumph in the history of the world.

CHAPTER XIX

THE STATE AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

THE various conventions and arrangements concluded between the State and its neighbours have been cited and described in their proper place and order. There are some larger or more general considerations suggested by the subject of these international relations that claim attention, and it is to be noted that the future of the Congo State is involved as much in the views its more powerful neighbours hold about it as in the manner in which the State itself discharges the onerous duties imposed by the General Acts of Berlin and Brussels. The indifference of Europe, which allowed the King of the Belgians to acquire so considerable a portion of the African Continent, has given place to more interested views, and these have made the chief neighbours of the State its vigilant and almost hostile critics. The slightest diminution, for instance, of effort in carrying out the difficult clauses relating to the spirit traffic is visited with censure, and almost pronounced sufficient to justify the sentence that the State had forfeited its right to live. Under these circumstances, it becomes necessary to consider what part the independent and neutral State of the Congo is likely to, or can advantageously, play in the larger African questions, and how far its fortunes may be affected by the ambitious policies of its neighbours.

Of those neighbours it is unnecessary to consider Portugal. Nothing is now likely to cloud their relations,

and the frontiers they hold in common are not those that excite the covetousness of outsiders, or that will have to be traversed by railways, telegraphs, and trade routes, for the benefit, not of one part but of the whole of Africa. The elimination of Portugal reduces the number of the State neighbours to three—France, Germany, and England. Under the head of England come for the present, and a still indefinite future, the questions of the Egyptian frontier and the Upper Nile.

In the first period of the existence of the Congo State, France showed herself a most exacting neighbour. She took every advantage of her superior power; and where she had no rights, and even no interests, she refused to yield on the map a yard of territory, or in the cabinet to recognise a single claim, without making the King of the Belgians as Sovereign of the Congo State pay dearly for the concession. Time may justify the exacting policy of the French Government; all that can be said at present is that it still awaits reward of any practical value. The final act of opposition on the part of the French Government was committed in 1894, when it coerced the State so far as to diminish the territory of the Bahr Gazelle ceded to it by the terms of the convention with Great Britain. But in the few years since that episode an improvement is perceptible in the views expressed in France on the subject of the Congo State, as well as in the attitude of the French Government. The perception is becoming clearer, that the best way of making the French sphere in Central Africa of any practical value is by utilising the Congo Railway as a means of communication with the Ubangi, while the Itimbiri route may supply the best route to the Semio. These considerations have caused a more amiable attitude on the part of the Quai D'Orsay, and perhaps it is not beyond the views of the directors of French policy that it may be preferable to see territory that cannot be French covered by the blue

banner with the golden star. It is safe for the immediate future, at all events, to assume that the Congo State will not be exposed to any grave peril from the side of France, and even that it will experience less hindrance than formerly in establishing and enjoying the full measure of its rights.

The outlook on the side of Germany is not so clear; and for several distinct reasons. With France the Congo State has had to conduct several delicate and difficult negotiations, and there have been not fewer than three separate rectifications of frontier, each to the disadvantage of the State. On the other hand, there have been no negotiations and no delimitations with Germany—the common frontier remaining as defined in the subsidiary arrangements following the Berlin Conference.

The boundary line between the territory of Germany in East Africa and the Congo State is formed by the 30th parallel from the 1st degree of south latitude to the 1° 20' degree of south latitude, and also by an imaginary "straight line drawn from the point of intersection of the 30th degree of east longitude with a parallel of 1° 20' of south latitude to as far as the northern extremity of Lake Tanganyika." This definition represents the first and more northerly section of the German-Congolese frontier. The second section is formed by the median line of Lake Tanganyika, and cannot give rise to any dispute or difference of opinion. The only points of divergence of interest or opinion that can arise are localised to the comparatively short section north of Lake Tanganyika, where it will be noted the frontier has not been demarcated on the spot.

At the time of those limits being assigned to the Congo State, the rights of Germany herself in East Africa were only in embryo, and it was not until the year after the Belgian Conference that Great Britain, by

the agreement of 26th October 1886, recognised Germany's sphere of influence on the mainland in a region which had been part of the old possessions of the Sultan of Zanzibar. The point of land contact occurs in a quarter where no exhaustive explorations had been made, and where the character, and even the appearance, of the country was quite unknown. Still, notwithstanding this vagueness, no steps whatever have been taken to give it consistency and a definite form. The journey of a German officer, Count von Götzen, across Africa in 1893-94, throws some light, however, on this part of the State territory, and the evidence he supplies as to the configuration of the country is certainly conducive to clearness of view, and, in that sense, to the avoidance of difficulty. In the first place, it will be well to note that among the chief results of the German officer's journey was the discovery of Lake Kivu, situated between Lakes Albert Edward and Tanganyika, and, by the admission of Count von Götzen, well within the limits of the Congo State as defined at Berlin. The following translation of the passages from Von Götzen's work, *Durch Afrika von Ost nach West*, describing Lake Kivu, will supply the reader with the clearest information on the subject:—

“The bed of Lake Kivu, according to my measurements with the hypsometer, is at an altitude of about 4800 feet (1485 metres). Its extent should be considerable, for on my crossing it I saw the immense sheet of blue water disappear far off in the clouds. Its general direction is from north to south. It is impossible for me to say how far it extends to the south, and whether it has a length of a hundred kilometres, or of more or less. The exploration of its southern part will be the task of some future explorer. It will become necessary *the day when the limits between the Congo State and German East Africa have to be fixed in a*

definite fashion. All that is known to-day is that a river flowing from the north-north-west, and bearing the name of the Rusisi, flows into the northern part of Lake Tanganyika. This is, no doubt, the southern affluent of Lake Kivu, the only one which it appears to have, and which, since the discovery of communication between Lake Tanganyika and the Congo, must be considered as belonging to the basin of the latter river. . . . The appearance of the isles of Lake Kivu is most picturesque. Their rocky and snow-white banks rise in peaks, and are frequented by herons and cranes. A fresh breeze ever rustles across the lake, and cools the air agreeably. Violent gales, which cast against the rocks white foam, and at the appearance of which the light canoes of the fishermen hasten to save themselves in the inlets, are exceedingly rare there. When one turns one's gaze to the north, a sort of immense barrier, formed by the Kirunga-tscha-Gongo and the four other Virunga mountains, is to be seen. It is a purely volcanic region. . . . The neighbourhood of Kivu is extremely fertile, and rich in provisions of every kind."

The discovery of Lake Kivu necessarily attracted much attention in the Congo State, and steps were taken to make the authority of the Government effective on its shores, for it was soon established that the whole of this lake lay west of the imaginary line from the point of intersection of the 30th parallel of east longitude and the 1° 20' of south latitude to the northern point of Lake Tanganyika, which marked the State's boundary. With this view, two stations, Lubenga and Luahilmita, were established on the eastern shore of Kivu, and several exploring expeditions, of which that under Lieutenant Lange claims specific mention, were sent to discover, if possible, a navigable route from Kivu to Tanganyika by the river named Rusisi, to which Von Götzen refers. These explorations have shown that the region is exceed-

ingly rich, and abounds in fine pasturage ; while the river, although its banks are exceedingly marshy, is navigable for part, if not the whole, of its course.

The effective occupation of Lake Kivu has contributed to increase the growing irritation of the Germans at the failure of their colony in East Africa. The Belgian triumph over the Arab slave hunters was a benefit to humanity and the natural consequence of the State's operations, but it seriously injured German trade east of Tanganyika. The efficient discharge of their duty in keeping out alcohol by the State agents has inflicted a further loss on those German traders whose fortune was made by supplying the negroes with the most fiery and deleterious spirits that German skill in toxic production could invent at a minimum of cost. Germany, like France, is creating colonies to order, but she has still to find one that can pay its way. The decline of the first and most promising of them in East Africa, after twelve years' effort and expenditure, has not made the German Government amicably disposed towards the neighbours whose energy and success have been the direct cause of the falling off in its trade and development. Despite the wishes and commands of emperors, trade follows its own track ; and in Central Africa the current is westward by the great Congo River, and the railways that will supplement and complete its utility.

In the early stages of the life of the Congo State the attitude of the German Government was specially amicable towards it, and Prince Bismarck lent his powerful support to the scheme more unreservedly than any other statesman at the Berlin Conference. But after the Arab campaign a change came over the views of the German Government ; and this was clearly reflected in the tone of the following correspondence, which, on the side of the German representative at Brussels, was certainly neither conciliatory nor a favourable instance of diplomatic courtesy.

I.

BRUSSELS, 20th November 1895.

MONSIEUR LE COMTE D'ALVENSLEBEN,
German Minister at Brussels.

In continuation of the conversation that I had with your Excellency last Saturday, and with the view of terminating the difficulties to which the execution of Mr. Stokes has given rise, I beg to give your Excellency the assurance that M. Lothaire shall be brought before a tribunal that shall be competent to throw complete light on the whole affair, to decide on the accusations of which he is the object, and to inflict on him, in case of his guilt being proved, a punishment in proportion to the gravity of the offence.

As I have already had occasion to say to your Excellency, the Government regrets that the legal formalities were not observed in the procedure pursued against Mr. Stokes. The Government of the Independent State of the Congo is disposed besides to pay in consequence to the Imperial Government a sum of one hundred thousand francs, by way of reparation for the losses the men of Mr. Stokes's caravan experienced through the fact of their being illegally deprived of their head.

Your Excellency has been good enough to inform me that eighty-six of the porters of Mr. Stokes's caravan, natives of German territory, are now illegally detained by our authorities.

If such is the case, the Government will give orders to place them at liberty, and to send them back to the coast at its expense. And for each of those who have been illegally detained and cannot be sent back to their native homes, it is ready to pay the Imperial Government an indemnity of one thousand marks in favour of the family or tribe to which they belonged. On the occasion of the arrangement of this question, your Excellency observed to me that the premium of ten per cent. that the Congo State paid its agents for the ivory that they bought is of a nature to prejudice the commerce of the German Protectorate. As I have assured your Excellency, this premium does not exist, and will not be paid in the future for the collection of ivory to the State agents.

EDMOND VAN EETVELDE.

II.

BRUSSELS, 25th November 1895.

MONSIEUR VAN EETVELDE,
Secretary of State of the State of the Congo.

The undersigned has the honour to inform the Secretary of State of the Congo that he has communicated to his Government his note of the 20th inst. relating to the execution of Mr. Stokes. I am

directed to reply to you that my Government, after having taken note of the regret expressed by the Congo State on the subject of the illegality of the procedure adopted in the Stokes affair, has equally taken note of the promise of the Congolese Government in regard to the judicial action that will be commenced against M. Lothaire. The Imperial Government accepts the sum of one hundred thousand francs, which is offered it by the Congo State as indemnity for the inconvenience and loss suffered by the companions of Stokes, who were natives of territory subject to the influence of Germany.

The Imperial Government equally accepts the engagement taken by the Congo State to set at liberty and to conduct to the coast, at its expense, the eighty-six porters of Stokes, natives of German territory, who were detained as prisoners in the Congo State, and to pay for each missing porter a sum of one thousand marks as an indemnity to the relations or chiefs of the tribe of these porters.

As to the promise of the Congo State that its agents shall no longer receive a premium on the collection of ivory, the Imperial Government hopes that this promise applies equally to caoutchouc and other products.

In begging you to be so good as to acknowledge the receipt of this communication, we add that, according to a telegram from Major Wissmann, the employés of the Independent State, and especially the Commandant of the Tanganyika district, continue to observe an illegal attitude. We reserve to ourselves the measures to be taken on this subject.

COMTE D'ALVENSLEBEN.

III.

BRUSSELS, 3rd December 1895.

MONSIEUR LE COMTE.

In reply to the letter that your Excellency has addressed to me under date of 25th November last, the Government of the Independent State of the Congo has the honour to confirm herewith the propositions made to the Imperial Government as set forth in my communication of 20th November, and to state that the Congo Government is ready to remit the sum of one hundred thousand francs, offered as reparation for the prejudice suffered by the men of the Stokes caravan through being illegally deprived of their chief.

It conceives that it ought to acquaint the Imperial Government that, according to recent telegrams from Zanzibar, the Stokes column, including the native wife of that merchant, had arrived on the coast with a stock of ivory acquired on Congolese territory. If such is the case, it is persuaded that the Imperial Government will in equity take into consideration this new state of things.

With regard to the commercial premiums that the Government would pay its agents, although it is of opinion that this question comes under the domain of its internal administration, and that it forms no part of its international engagements, it may recall here the fact that it has already had occasion to assure your Excellency that this premium does not exist.

The Government has no knowledge of the irregular acts which, according to a telegram from M. Wissmann, might be attributed to its agents in the region of the Tanganyika; but it at once declares that it will examine the communication announced by the Imperial Government, with the most sincere desire to establish the relations between the State and the German possessions on a footing of the best neighbourship. It hopes that the German Government will, on its side, receive in the same spirit the information that it has to place before it on the subject of the traffic in arms and of the contraband commerce which are carried on in the region of the Lakes by the Arabs, the former slave merchants being desirous of returning to their former illicit actions.

EDMOND VAN EETVELDE.

IV.

BRUSSELS, 6th December 1895.

MONSIEUR LE COMTE.

In continuation of my letter of 3rd December, I beg to remit herewith to your Excellency a cheque for one hundred thousand francs on the National Bank, to the order of the Caisse des Legations at Berlin.

EDMOND VAN EETVELDE.

V.

BRUSSELS, 9th December 1895.

MONSIEUR VAN EETVELDE.

The undersigned has the honour to reply as follows to the communication of 3rd December made to him by M. Van Eetvelde, Secretary of State for the Independent State of the Congo.

In its note of 20th November the Government of the Independent State of the Congo declared, on the subject of the premiums to be paid its agents and officers on the collection of ivory, that these premiums did not exist, and will not be paid in the future.

In my reply of the 25th of that month the Imperial Government took note of this promise, and expressed at the same time the hope that these premiums will be paid neither on ivory nor on caoutchouc, nor on any other produce.

In its communication of the 3rd December the Congo Government seems to maintain that the payment of such commercial premiums to its

agents is not in contradiction with its international engagements, and adds that these premiums do not exist. The promise given in the communication of 20th November—which relates to ivory only—saying that in future these premiums will not be paid, is not repeated for caoutchouc and other articles in the note of 3rd December; but, under a veiled form (in verschleierter form), the Congo State seems even to claim that it has the (indisputable) right to create such premiums.

The Imperial Government can in no way agree to this interpretation, and cannot conceal its astonishment (Befremden) at the Congo State seeming to wish to withdraw a promise made such a little time before.

The Imperial Government considers that the Government of the Independent State of the Congo, which itself carries on commerce, deals a heavy blow to commercial liberty as guaranteed by the Congo Act, in allotting premiums for the gathering in of the produce of the country by agents and officers charged with public functions.

It is evident that it cannot be a question of free competition if on one side ordinary merchants trade with the natives, when on the other hand these same natives find themselves in the presence of agents and officers carrying on trade who, in their quality of representatives of the Government, exercise a great influence on the populations, and often exercise over them the power of life and death.

The Imperial Government would regret should the Congo State not take these observations into account. It is a question that the Congo State will have to examine, by considering its reputation (Ansehen) and its situation with regard to the Governments of civilised countries. The Imperial Government has a practical interest in no longer seeing its interests injured in any way by the granting of these premiums. For these reasons the Imperial Government, before considering the difference as entirely ended, demands formally that the Congo State declares candidly (unumwenden) that in the future no premium will be paid on caoutchouc and other produce as well as on ivory.

COMTE D'ALVENSLEBEN.

VI.

BRUSSELS, 11th December 1895.

MONSIEUR LE COMTE.

In reply to the communication of your Excellency of the 9th of this month, I beg, without entering into the examination of the question of right, to declare formally that there does not exist any commercial premium for the agents of the Independent State of the Congo, and that the Government has no intention of establishing any, neither for caoutchouc nor for ivory, nor for any other produce whatever.

EDMOND VAN EETVELDE.

Notwithstanding the positive and categorical statement of Baron Van Eetvelde, the Germans do not appear to have been satisfied, and, in different forms, the same charges that the Secretary of State so effectually disposed of have been brought forward from time to time in the German official papers. A Hamburg journal, of semi-official authority, went so far as to make the following statement at the commencement of the present year, while another organ impugned the right of the State to establish stations on the east shore of Lake Kivu. The statement referred to read as follows:—

“The Congo State has signally violated the principles of free trade in the basin of the Congo by imposing export duties on ivory and india-rubber to an extent which renders competition impossible, and that it intends to place similar duties on copper, in spite of all protests, based on the freedom of trade guaranteed by the Berlin Congo Act. All the chiefs recognised by the Government are bound to plant coffee and cocoa under the superintendence of State officials, and receive ten centimes for every coffee or cocoa plant seventy-five centimetres or more, *but no share of the proceeds of the crop*. The Government has laid on these products an export duty of nine francs thirty-five centimes per one hundred kilogrammes.”

The italicised sentence is a perversion of the truth, the fact being, as already explained in chapter XVIII., that the net proceeds of the crop are equally divided between the chiefs and the Government. The bias of the article is revealed in its complete disregard of facts. The Berlin Congo Act, as the writer chooses to term the General Act of the Berlin Conference, gave the State no powers of levying taxes on its produce. They were not conferred until the Brussels Conference. The duties alleged by the Germans to be an infraction of the principles of free trade, of which Germany is known to be such a zealous advocate, are imposed by the rights conferred by that

conclave of Powers, including Germany, and are strictly limited to the scale of an international tariff in Africa. Moreover, these imposts are the legitimate and necessary sources of strength by which a Government alone has its being; but it would be difficult for the German critic to show how the placing of an *export* duty, necessary as it is for the support of the administration, can have any other result than to handicap the article produced in the markets of the world. If the writer is confused in his logic and perverts the facts, there is no misconstruing his animosity, and, unfortunately, there is too much reason for apprehending that the German Government has designs on Tanganyika, and the northern strip of frontier in which lies Lake Kivu, that are not in strict accordance with the definition of the eastern frontier as laid down at Berlin.

Under these circumstances it is desirable, in the general interest, that no time should be wasted in commencing the necessary specific delimitation of the German-Congolese frontier, and in discovering what precise designs lurk beneath the criticism and scarcely veiled censure of German diplomatists and official writers. Of one thing it is permissible to feel convinced, and that is, that the longer the discovery is put off the more serious it will be when revealed.

There remains for consideration the relations between the State and its British neighbours; and these are, from some points of view, the most important and the most delicate of all. If a general term has to be employed to describe their whole tenor, it is true to say that the attitude of the British Government throughout has been extremely sympathetic to the work of the King of the Belgians in Central Africa. The bent of English feeling in the matter is entirely in the same direction, although it has to be admitted that there is a deficiency of accurate information as to the civilising work done in the Congo



KARIMI—LAKE ALBERT EDWARD

region, and also that some sympathy was alienated from the State by the untoward execution of Mr. Stokes. The diplomatic discussions and engagements between the Governments have been of an amicable nature, and the convention of 1894 was specially framed with a view to making the Congo State a participant in the benefits that would follow the reassertion of Egyptian power in the provinces wrested from it by the Mahdi. For the moment, pending the realisation of Sir Herbert Kitchener's plans at and above Khartoum, the full terms of the convention may be regarded as dormant; but there is no room to doubt that, in the course of time, they will be literally fulfilled.

At the same time that the relations of the British and Congo Governments have been marked with cordiality, the latter has experienced at the hands of a few English critics some unmerited censure and scant justice. Although the Belgians seem to entertain doubts on the subject of the Congo as a colony, and to shrink from all responsibility in Central Africa, they are extremely sensitive to outside criticism of the acts of their countrymen on the Congo, and especially to the criticism of Englishmen. This statement will at least justify a plea to the opponents or sceptics as to the value of the work on the Congo, to make sure of their facts before attacking a work that has so much merit, or injuring the sentiment of a friendly and well-disposed nation. I have, personally, no doubt that this plea will not be summarily rejected by Sir Charles Dilke, the most formidable critic the State has had to encounter, and whose opinion on all international and imperial questions carries the greatest weight with his countrymen. I believe myself, that if Sir Charles Dilke will reconsider all the facts of the case relating to the position in Central Africa, and as to the manner in which it bears on the whole of the larger African question on the Nile and the Lakes, he will modify the opinions he has expressed in opposition to

the existing Congo administration. The same careful study that he has directed to every branch of foreign policy will show him that the Belgian administration in Central Africa, with no material advantages on its side, and under many added difficulties, has performed a great and useful task, and that it has upheld and advanced the cause of civilisation. It would be impossible to expect that, in a work carried out under the conditions prevalent in this part of the world—a mere handful of whites among millions of blacks, sunk, for the most part, in the lowest stages of barbarism, superstition, and cannibalism—there should not be some regrettable occurrences, some acts of high-handed authority, some arbitrary measures of militarism, like Lothaire's execution of Stokes. The marvel is only that they have been so few.

The charges brought by Sir Charles Dilke in his motion in the House of Commons, on 2nd April 1897, for the summoning of a new Conference, came under two heads. The first was, that the officers of the State encouraged cannibalism, or at least systematically sanctioned it during the Arab campaign; and the second, that they were debasing the black races, and paving the way to their extinction, by the introduction of alcohol, and, more specifically, of gin. Had either of these charges been true in even a less degree than Sir Charles Dilke alleged, they would not merely have constituted a grave breach of the Brussels General Act, but they would have destroyed the claim of the Congo State to the sympathy and admiration of the civilised world. The extreme gravity of the charges, their discrediting and destructive character, if substantiated, render retractation and reparation the more necessary when they are shown to have been baseless, and when, in the case of a highly competent and broad-minded statesman like Sir Charles Dilke, they can only have been advanced through a misreading of evidence and a misinterpretation of facts.

In order to show how baseless these charges are, it is necessary to cite their particulars. Sir Charles Dilke said, in his speech supporting his motion, "The Congo State is in the habit of making razzias with cannibal allies. A distinguished African explorer and a public functionary, whom I have the honour of knowing, told me once that Baron Dhanis was by far the best of the officers of the Congo, that he was a man of noble character and excellent reputation, but still that he *used to ration his men with human flesh*. I thought that that was a horrible African story, but the recently published book of Captain Hinde *proves beyond the least doubt that it was the real truth*. The last expedition of Baron Dhanis was directed by six white officers, and comprised five hundred Haussas and twenty-five thousand cannibal allies. Captain Hinde is an intimate friend of Baron Dhanis. The soldiers were rationed for months with human flesh. The captain goes further, and explains how cannibalism was a great element in the success of the campaign."

The charge was therefore of the most sweeping kind, and it was represented as being proved "beyond the least doubt" by the statements of Captain Hinde, a friend and admirer of Baron Dhanis. The first point to be clearly ascertained, therefore, is, What are those statements?

An examination of Dr. Hinde's book, *The Fall of the Congo Arabs*, to which reference has previously been made, will show that the statements therein do not support Sir Charles Dilke's charge. There is a great deal therein as to the prevalence of cannibalism among most of the tribes of the Congo basin, but the authorities of the State can in no way be held responsible for the practices of the negroes and the state of their society before the effective establishment of their authority in Central Africa. Cannibalism, not less than the slave trade, was the curse and the stigma on our common humanity, which led the King of the Belgians to begin an

adventure, under the banner of civilisation and progress, that would have appealed to the chivalrous instincts of a knight of Caerleon. But no shadow of responsibility for the existence of the plague spot could rest on those whose mission was to remove it, yet it is only by such a course of reasoning that Sir Charles Dilke could speak of "the twenty-five thousand cannibal allies" of Baron Dhanis.

The policy upon which the Congo State has had consistently to act has been to grapple with the problems and difficulties of its position in turn, to husband its limited resources, and to finish the work it had in hand before it undertook another. In 1892-93 the object to be achieved was to put down the slave raids of the Arabs, to drive these invaders out of the country, and to thus accomplish the first half of the task of civilising the Dark Continent. It was a task of the greatest difficulty and danger; the Arabs were well armed and formidable as warriors; they were of the same race, and in some cases the same men, who had followed the Mahdi in his triumphant progress from Obeid to Berber. No one could tell, as an experienced English missionary and resident on the Congo said, which side would conquer; and the triumph of the Arabs on the Upper Congo meant the obliteration of civilisation, the massacre of every white man from Stanley Falls to the Cataracts. These, indeed, are facts of which there cannot be "the least doubt."

Under such circumstances, was the State and its representative, Baron Dhanis, to reject the co-operation of Gongo Lutete and his cannibal tribe? To have rejected it, would have meant not only one danger the more in leaving the powerful and warlike Batetela tribe unemployed in the rear of the expedition during its critical campaign, but it would have been to leave unprofited a golden opportunity of bringing home to the blacks the fact that they need no longer fear the Arabs, and that the knell of the slave razzias had sounded. Gongo Lutete

was first the ally and the tool of the Arabs. His chastisement by the State troops was the first episode in the struggle which concluded at Nyangwe and Kassongo. When he gave in his submission and tendered his alliance against the Arabs, it would have been folly, from every point of view, to have rejected it. At such a juncture the reader will see for himself that it was impossible to make the terms of acceptance the institution of a great moral reform in the extinction of cannibalism. The blacks had to be taken as what they were, and not as what they should become. Yet that is the only line of argument by which this alliance, for a temporary but paramount consideration, can be denounced. On the same reasoning it would be sound to denounce the alliance of Warren Hastings with the Rajah of Benares, and of Wellesley with one Mahratta chief against another, because the practice of burning their widows alive was common to them all.

The statements in Dr. Hinde's book relate exclusively to the acts of Gongo Lutete and his Batetela followers. There is absolutely no justification for the statement that Baron Dhanis, or any other Belgian officer, "used to ration his men with human flesh." The soldiers of the State never have been cannibals; the men of the Dhanis column were chiefly Haussas from the coast, and at all times cannibalism has been a penal offence under the Code of the Congo. The acts of cannibalism described by Dr. Hinde were committed exclusively by the contingent of Gongo Lutete. Baron Dhanis had no power to prevent them, and there is no reason to believe that he was aware of their occurrence until after the event. The scientific observation of Dr. Hinde as to the effect of the practice on the sanitation of the camps, and its consequent influence in promoting the success of the campaign, is a personal remark for which the Doctor must bear all the responsibility himself, and for which, neither

directly nor indirectly, can the State authorities be called to account.

The passages which specially relate to the matter at issue in Dr. Hinde's book are the following: (it is unnecessary to reproduce those which only contain the gruesome details of a horrible and repulsive subject.)

"It was here (the Lomami, 26th November 1892) that the cannibal tendencies of our allies, and the marauders who followed our camp, showed itself to our eyes for the first time. On returning across the town after having followed the inhabitants one or two miles beyond, I remarked that the killed and wounded had all disappeared, and some of my men told me that the allies had cut them into pieces, and carried them off to serve as food. I attached no faith to the story. On returning to our camp we were again attacked. The allies saved themselves by a hasty flight, leaving behind them, scattered along the route, a number of human arms, legs, and heads, which the men, to whose statements I had paid little heed, hastened to point out to me as proof they had not lied. . . . It is easier to imagine than to describe our disgust, for we found that the marauders who followed our camp, and our allies, made no difference between our killed and wounded and those of the enemy."

The evidence of the witness cited in support of Sir Charles Dilke's charge is therefore clear that acts of cannibalism were confined to the Batetela contingent, which numbered probably not more than ten thousand men. They did in the campaign exactly what they were accustomed to do in their own villages, and it was impossible for the Belgian authorities to punish, much less to seek to cure, a rooted national practice during the progress of the keen struggle with the Arabs that was to decide their own fate.

But it is impossible to let the misrepresentation pass unnoticed that they did nothing, and that by a studied

indifference they encouraged the practice. Dr. Hinde mentions at least two cases in which the Belgian officers, even at this critical moment, took effective measures to stop cannibalism and to punish its promoters. Having learnt that the Basongos were in the habit of receiving supplies of human food by boat, orders were given to fire on and stop these boats as they descended the Lomami. As a matter of fact, the Belgians did fire on these vessels, by which many cargoes were saved, and they finally succeeded in putting a stop to the traffic. Another incident is mentioned by the English officer. It relates to a Basongo chief whose cannibal instincts were so deep-rooted that, after every attempt had been made to wean him from his ways, he was executed by Baron Dhanis as an example. These measures were the true indication of the sentiments, on the subject of cannibalism, of Belgian officers, of whom Baron Dhanis is not, as Sir Charles Dilke seems to represent, an exceptional but a typical representative. No English writer or public man should leave himself open to the charge of suggesting, even by inference, that it is possible for Belgian officers to have any other opinion on the subject of cannibalism than that held by their own countrymen.

The subsequent action of the Congo Government has shown what are its views and policy on the subject of cannibalism. It is a penal offence. The killing of a man for food figures on the Code of the Congo State as murder, and, wherever that code is in force, that clause has as much validity as in Europe.

The second charge made by Sir Charles Dilke against the Government of the Congo State was, that "Gin is the principal article of import into the Congo State," and that the negroes are consequently in process of degeneration, and moving towards complete extinction, through the extensive introduction of spirits into Central Africa, by the permission and under the flag for which so much

respect and admiration have been claimed. If this charge were true in fact, it would constitute a serious breach of the General Act of Brussels. It would destroy the title of the King, and the men who have carried out his orders, to the claim of having done a great and worthy action. On the other hand, if it is not true, if it is demonstrably false, the gravity of the charge recoils with tenfold force on those who make it. In this case it is not true, it is so obviously in disaccord with the facts, that one is only at a loss to understand how Sir Charles Dilke could have been misled into making such a statement.

During the year preceding Sir Charles Dilke's speech the import of all spirits into the Congo represented one and a half per cent. of the total imports; in the year following it the ratio fell to one per cent., not only because the total imports had increased, but because the actual import of spirits had diminished. In 1895, 1,465,590 litres of alcohol were imported, in 1896 the figures fell to 1,215,726 litres, and in 1897 still further to 1,138,125 litres—thus showing a diminution in quantity of twenty-five per cent. in two years.

As a matter of fact, the Congo State, from the first period of its existence as the Congo Association, has consistently set its face against the spirit traffic, and it is due to the measures of the King of the Belgians, and to his imperative injunctions, that the illicit importation of spirits has failed to pierce the western barrier raised by his wisdom and energy in Central Africa. If the Governments of Germany and France had acted in the same manner, the "nigger-killer" would never have been known throughout that vast portion of the Dark Continent. At the same time it has to be noted that before the formation of the Congo Association the liquor traffic was established on the Lower Congo by the Portuguese, the English, and the Americans. Even philanthropy would not have supported repressive measures against

the authors of this traffic on the part of the State. The existence of the state of things at Banana and Boma had to be recognised, and the only course left to the Government in controlling the trade, and in preventing its expansion, was to place as heavy an import duty as possible on the article. A tax of fifteen francs the hectolitre (equivalent to one shilling the gallon) was in the first place imposed, and on the 2nd April 1895 this was raised to twenty-five francs.

But in the region above the Cataracts it was possible to take firmer ground. There the traffic in alcohol was practically non-existent, the other Europeans had no foothold, and the State could pass its own laws for the prohibition of the use of alcohol. It did so in the most effective manner by a succession of decrees, which restricted the use of the alcohol allowed to be imported to non-Africans, and forbade its being employed as an article of exchange with the natives. It also restricted the supply of spirits to any individual to three litres a month. Even the gift of spirits to a native was forbidden, and every infraction of the laws on this subject was punishable by fine or imprisonment. In no other part of the Continent of Africa was the same effort made, were the same precautions taken, to cope with every infraction possible, or at least conceivable, of the liquor traffic.

The following are the three principal clauses of the Governor-General's order of 9th March 1897, regulating the introduction of alcoholic liquors above the Kwilu :—

“Article 1. No distilled alcoholic drink shall be introduced or sold above the Kwilu, without the authority of the Governor-General or of his delegate.

“A request for this authority should state the names, Christian names, and the profession of the non-natives making the request, and mention the kind and quantity of distilled alcoholic liquors to be introduced.

“The authority will be always revocable.

“Article 2. Merchants residing above the Kwilu, and authorised to sell distilled alcoholic drinks, are required to keep a register showing on one side, under the date, the receipt of the different kinds of spirit in their separate categories, and on the other side the names and ranks of the purchasers, as well as the quantities furnished to each of them.

“A copy of this register, as well as an inventory of the alcohols in store, shall be drawn up every three months, and sent by the proprietor or the agent of each factory to the district commissary, or to the functionary appointed by him.

“Article 5. Contravention of these articles (1 and 2) shall be punished, conformably with the stipulation of the twelfth article of the decree of 16th July 1890, by a fine of from one thousand to ten thousand francs, and by a sentence of penal servitude of from five days to five months, or by one of these penalties alone. All heads of houses of commerce, or other persons having employés or workmen under them, are responsible for contravention of the present order, as is set forth in article 14 of the decree of 16th July 1890.”

Sir Charles Dilke made a subsidiary charge, to the effect that the chief article likely to be conveyed by the Congo Railway in the first stages of its existence was alcohol. The directors of the company made a reply showing that in 1896 the proportion of spirit carried on its line was less than two and a half per cent. But there was still further and clearer evidence on the subject, and that was in the gradual diminution of the territory open to the traffic in alcohol. The decree of 16th July 1890 prohibited the importation or the sale of spirits in the territories above Inkissi. In March 1897 this prohibition was extended to the zone situated above the river Kwilu, and a more recent decree (September 1897) has still further increased the region of prohibition by fixing it

at the river Mpozo, which joins the Congo near Matadi. To make the difference clear to the reader, it may be explained that Inkissi represented, practically speaking, the 15th degree, the Kwilu the 14th and the Mpozo the 13th degrees, of east longitude; but the real significance of the operation lay in the fact that these changes meant the gradual exclusion of the whole of the tract covered by the new railway from the area of the liquor traffic. The railway, which was apprehended by Sir Charles Dilke as likely to prove a potent auxiliary in the spread of the use of alcohol, has therefore been turned to a different purpose. Alcohol may not traverse its iron way, and its point of departure, not its terminus, marks the limit of alcohol introduction.

These facts will show the reader how carefully the State authorities have endeavoured to check and control the liquor traffic. Not one of the other Governments involved has made anything like the same systematic and strenuous effort in the matter. The Belgians have had to deal with a denser black population than any others, and their own numerical strength has been far less in proportion. Of them it has been said, with no exaggeration, that they had undertaken in Central Africa the task of giants, while they only disposed of the resources of pigmies. No one who looks at the facts which it has been my privilege to place before the public from the most authentic sources, and after careful examination of the official statistics, can doubt that the Belgians have in every respect accomplished a great work on the Congo, and in no particular has that work been more conspicuous than in the very two departments of the administration selected by Sir Charles Dilke for attack. Cannibalism is rapidly becoming as extinct as the slave trade, and the importation of alcohol has been reduced to the smallest limits.

It is not to be wondered at if the Belgians should

smart under undeserved criticism, and if they should retaliate with observations as to the interested motives of English opposition, for which I am confident there is at present no justification. The unfortunate Stokes affair, caused by an error of judgment on the part of an officer who had done good work for the State, cannot recur, for the simple reason that military law has been superseded by civil law throughout the State. The estrangement caused by that incident, and the suspicions it engendered, are surely not destined to endure when it is seen how closely the interests of the British dominion in Africa and of the Congo State can be made to combine, and how the destiny of the one seems by a natural process to fit into and to supplement the work and mission of the other. It would be a lasting pity if the natural process of friendly accord and gravitation towards a course of united action should be prevented by harsh and biassed criticism on the part of English critics, even when moved by a sense of justice and not of jealousy. One plea, on broad and general grounds, may well be advanced without offending the *amour propre* of the censors, and, at the same time, without making oneself the partisan of the Congo State. Let such criticism as is directed on the administration be swayed by a desire to get at the truth, to recognise the facts, to make no statement that is not supported by the figures, and, above all, to recognise that if in one minor detail some wrong has been done, and that all may not have been for the best, no human undertaking should be judged otherwise than by the general result and the preponderant effect of the measures taken. It is on that ground that the Congo Government can fearlessly take its place at the bar of history. It has done its work conscientiously; from any point of view it has done it well: if we only think of its limited resources, we shall not refrain from pronouncing it marvellous.

Yet there is no disputing the fact that the most

unfriendly criticism bestowed on the Congo State of recent years has apparently originated in England, for it has appeared in the press of that country. It is easy to meet and expose a statement which is not in accordance with facts and figures, and to win from a chivalrous opponent like Sir Charles Dilke the admission that he is mistaken; but it is not easy to counteract the hostile influences, wherever they may originate, that do not care for facts, that will make no admission, and that hope to benefit by a well-planned system of discrediting the object attacked. In fact it is impossible. All that can be hoped is, that these schemes bear so clearly their own impress that they will defeat their own ends, and that in course of time the editors of great English journals will see that those who freely attack the work of the Congo State have some object in doing so, and in insisting that the persons making the charges shall furnish some better preliminary evidence of their good faith and accuracy than their name, of which nobody ever heard until it figured at the foot of an indictment against a friendly State, and a people entitled to our sympathy and goodwill. In this way there will be a practical solution of the difficulty. There will be no stifling of criticism when the Congo State has erred, but there will be at least some prior examination of the point whether there is evidence of an intention to err. The Congo State, in common with the rest of the world, must be judged by its deeds; but at least no one should be allowed to say with impunity that the gin trade constitutes the bulk of its commerce when it is only one per cent., nor should correspondents like Mr. Sjoebloem be granted free play in the London papers, when his assertions can be thus answered by Colonel Wahis, Governor-General of the Congo at the time:—

“SIR,—On my return to Europe, several articles recently published in the English press on Congolese

affairs have been brought to my notice, and particularly an interview with the missionary, Mr. Sjoebloem, who has made a personal attack on me.

“ I will not leave without reply the accusations levelled against the agents of the State. During the inspection that I have lately made in the districts of the interior, I had occasion to examine into their administration, to see how the natives were treated, to meet the greater number of the missionaries, and I formally declare that it is absolutely false to represent the agents of the State as inhuman and cruel towards the native populations. If there have been individual abuses, as have happened everywhere else, I have ascertained that the instructions given by the Government to its agents on the subject of their relations with the natives have been, as a general rule, carried out. I will examine in order the accusations of Mr. Sjoebloem.

“ To commence with, he reproduces the old statements brought forward by the Rev. Mr. Murphy in *The Times* of 18th November 1895. As soon as those facts arrived within my knowledge, I gave orders to examine into the affair, and an inquiry was made in February 1896 by Judge De Lancker.

“ This inquiry reduced Mr Murphy's allegations to a little less than nothing. Not a single witness could be found to confirm the alleged murder of a native woman by a soldier of the Lofila post. Again, it was proved that the mutilation, of which a little girl was the victim, had been committed by a native, who was sentenced to five years' penal servitude for the crime. So far as concerns the alleged attack in November 1894 on the village of Bompanga, 'without any kind of provocation,' I have obtained proof that the operation against that village was provoked by acts of insubordination.

“ When I was at Coquilhatville in November 1896, I took the initiative in having an interview with Messrs.

Banks and Sjoebloem on the subject of the facts to which Mr. Murphy had called the attention of the public, and I informed them of the result of the inquiry. I must oppose a formal contradiction to the fantastic account Mr. Sjoebloem gives of our interview. Mr. Sjoebloem says that I refused to receive the evidence of natives that he had brought with him in order to attest the truth of a fact of which he accused some soldiers.

“The point in question was precisely to discover if in the affair of Bompanga the five soldiers, sent to arrest a chief who refused to present himself before the District Commission, had attacked the natives, or if the latter had endeavoured to prevent the arrest, and thus provoked an attack.

“I told Mr. Sjoebloem that a detailed inquiry had already been made on this subject, and that, from the depositions and examination of the circumstances, it appeared that the five soldiers, who found themselves confronted by a great number of natives, had done nothing but repulse an attack.

“I added, that the natives collected by Mr. Sjoebloem were evidently the same who had denounced the soldiers as the aggressors in the first instance; that I consequently knew what they had to say; that the facts dating back more than eighteen months, and having been gone into in the presence of Europeans and natives, whose responsibility was involved, there was clearly no further motive for another inquiry.

“With strange obstinacy, Mr. Sjoebloem constantly returned to the accusation which had already been several times examined. He did not furnish me with any useful detail for the investigation that I desired to make, but he openly showed the evil sentiments that he cherished towards our agents. It was then that I told him that he was himself accused by a number of natives of inciting the people to resist the orders of the autho-

rities, that these accusations appeared well founded, and rendered him liable to legal penalties.

"I may add here, that if Mr. Sjoebloem has not been prosecuted at this moment, it has been precisely because, on account of these circumstances, any action against him would have resembled reprisals, and it seemed desirable to avoid this.

"In his recent interview Mr. Sjoebloem brings forward some new facts. Forty-five villages have been burnt. Where? When? By whom? A native was killed by a soldier at Ebira in February 1895, and the Rev. Mr. Banks, the superior of Mr. Sjoebloem, who has lived at Bolengi since 1887, and whose evidence will certainly not be suspected, has declared on oath that up to March 1895 he has never had any complaint to make.

"Mr. Sjoebloem has seen natives' hands cut off. It has undoubtedly been the case that soldiers have cut off the hands of enemies killed after a combat. The mutilation of corpses is a custom which exists, or has existed, in the greater part of Africa. A warrior carries away the hands or heads he has cut off, as proof of his valour. In the Congo State, more than in many other countries, great efforts have been made to bring about the disappearance of these abominable practices. The penal law declares them to be crimes, and punishes any mutilation of corpses with penal servitude, for terms varying from two months to two years.

"Of all the facts cited by Mr. Sjoebloem, one alone is true, and this has been surrounded by the missionary with false details. I refer to the affair of Mandaka Vagigo. It is true that this village, having refused to pay its tax, had to be punished in October 1896. The inhabitants resisted, and lost a certain number of men. The punishment in itself was legitimate, but, contrary to instructions, a fault was committed in giving the command of the troops to a black non-commissioned officer. Mr.

Sjoebloem insinuates that the guilty officer was not punished. He was dismissed the service.

“It is not for me to decide the progress made by the Congo State since its origin, or to describe the remarkable results obtained, as much from the point of view of material progress, as from that of the improvement of the moral and social condition of the native populations. But, as head of the local Government, it is my duty to protest loudly against the insults of which Belgian officers have been made the object. I have seen them at their work, I know the difficulties of their task, I have been able to appreciate the elevated view they take of their duties, and I am proud to say that the officers in the Congo service have maintained their title to esteem and to respect.

“WAHIS.”

These unceasing attacks on the minor actions, as well as the general policy of the State, have not, unnaturally, given rise to an impression that they were inspired by a settled purpose of hostility. Sir Charles Dilke's language and statements made responsible persons at Brussels think that “there was a set purpose to create for the Congo State difficulties both in Africa and in Europe, to discredit it by magnifying isolated facts, and by preparing, under the colour of philanthropy, the moment when there could be produced the territorial and financial designs concealed behind that campaign. The plan is clearly traced. At the commencement a feint is made that the sacrificed interests of the native populations of the whole of Africa is the cause they have at heart, and the idea of a new Conference is put forward. As soon as this idea has appeared to germinate and public opinion has been baited, it becomes a question of the Congo State alone, and the division of its territories is boldly spoken of.” That such views should prevail among Belgian men of affairs is regrettable, but not altogether extraordinary, when we remember the form of

attack, and that foreigners are unable to distinguish between the expressions of an individual Englishman, if of prominent position and distinguished, and of the public opinion of the country. At the same time it is clear that, in taking this extreme view of British policy and intentions, the authorities at Brussels were misled as to the significance and importance of the criticism by which their sentiments were injured.

The policy of the British Government since the Anglo-Portuguese Convention, which was the direct precursor of the Berlin Conference, has been uniformly friendly, and directed towards the strengthening of the Congo State. The Congo State has, on its side, been a party to the establishment of the necessary telegraphic communications across Africa which will link Egypt with the Cape. Article 5 of the Agreement of 1894 with the Congo State provides for the construction of the telegraph, on the importance of which Mr. Cecil Rhodes has so very wisely laid stress, for, where the telegraph is, the railway will not be many years in following. But it is by no means clear that Mr. Rhodes is accurate in saying that "Germany is not interested in this matter." She has long been waiting for some opportunity of claiming compensation on Tanganyika and Kivu for the diminished value of the part of East Africa that England too generously ceded her out of the Sultanate of Zanzibar, and it is very possible that the realisation of Mr. Rhodes's plans will appear to her the psychological moment. But if Germany's grasp closes on the Lakes, where then will be the free water-way from Cairo to the Zambesi?

The first step in the process of securing the telegraph in the earlier stage, and the railway in the later, along the eastern boundary of the Congo territory, will be the support of its Government against any aggressive action on the side of Germany, when it becomes clear that she claims *to be interested in the matter*. The State has

survived all perils from the side of France; there is no sound reason for supposing that any exist on the side of the British possessions; but the future relationship with Germany is not so clear, and may even be termed clouded. With a benevolent attitude on the part of Great Britain these clouds must pass away, without any serious deviation from the terms of the frontier limitations assigned for the State at the time of the Berlin Conference.

There are, however, larger considerations that justify the view that there is a community of interest and that there should be identity of action between Great Britain and the Congo State. A great deal has been said and written of late on the subject of the alliances England should seek, but, among all the suggestions made, there has not been one to the effect that she should range herself on the side of the well-doers and with the cause of right. She cannot play the part of policeman all the world over; but where she has interests, where she has planted her feet, there she should combine her action with that of those who are doing the same good work that she wishes to do herself. Mr. Cecil Rhodes said in the speech to which reference has been made, that his measures will give England "Africa, the whole of it." That is an unhappy phrase, which may well defeat its own object. To attempt to turn it into practical fact would be to strain our limited strength, to compel us to concentrate on Africa the attention and the effort that are needed in the far more important and valuable Continent of Asia, and to lead us to pursue the phantom of power and commercial prosperity, while Russia secured the substance, in China and India.

In Africa, Great Britain possesses immense territories that it will take centuries to develop. She can find there employment for millions of money and for thousands of Englishmen. For the completion of her communications and the proper extension of her commerce she certainly

needs, on the part of her neighbours, a similar policy of commercial liberty to that she carries out herself. Well, she has such a neighbour in the Congo State. Even Mr. Rhodes is not a more advanced advocate of railways and telegraphs than the King of the Belgians has shown himself to be, and, long before Mr. Rhodes's railway has touched Tanganyika, the telegraph and the State railroad from the Lomami and Lualaba will have reached the same destination. In these operations are to be seen, not the progress of a rival, but the harmonious action of an ally and an associate in the common task of civilisation. Yet the suggestion of an impossible and unnecessary scheme like making "the whole of Africa" English is calculated to alarm those who were disposed to work in accord with us, and, by alarming them, to raise difficulties, suggest counter projects, and generally retard progress.

There is, however, no reason to believe that the phrase cited represents either the drift of British policy or the immediate projects of Mr. Rhodes; and it would not surprise anyone if Mr. Rhodes himself admitted that his phrase was not a happy one, except so far as he may have been thinking of commerce and not of conquest. The policy of Great Britain cannot be based on surer foundations than to respect the treaties it has signed as long as the other side respects them, and to co-operate with those who are doing good work analogous to its own. The question that arises in connection with Africa is: What other nation or State is engaged on the same task and is discharging the duty in the same spirit? Is it France? Is it Germany? Are they carrying out a definite programme for the elevation of the black race in the scale of civilisation, and for making it fit to enjoy the benefits of peace, security, and education? Are they promoting the interests of trade, not for the merchants of Marseilles or Hamburg, but for the world and Great Britain? Are British traders welcome under the Tricolor or Black

Eagle? Are the frontiers open or closed? Will the Germans give Mr. Rhodes a right-of-way east of Tanganyika, or the French one on the Niger? Everyone knows that the answer to all these questions is in the negative. It is precisely because the points involved are answerable alone in the affirmative where flies the blue banner with the golden star that it may be claimed for the Congo State that it is discharging an analogous task to that undertaken by Britain throughout the world, and that therefore their interests must harmonise with the only real harmony arising from identity of view and of object.

There remains but one practical question. How far is it true to say that the Government of the Congo State has done good work in Central Africa? Its motives have been impugned and its achievements minimised by some English critics, but, in my humble opinion, this attitude has been due to some misconception, and to the fact that the appalling position of black savagery from the slave trade, cannibalism, and fetishism had not been sufficiently taken into account. The record of the work of the Government that I have been able to provide, of the motives that have inspired its policy, and of the results that have flowed from it, will, I hope, make the Congo State, and the men who have framed its constitution in a large spirit of toleration and justice, more widely and more favourably known to the British public. The Belgians have done there a work of which we should have been proud if they were Englishmen. They have done it with slender resources in men and money. The conquerors of half the globe can well applaud the action of a small State and admirable people, over the birth of whose constitution English statesmanship exercised a fostering care; and from no quarter will praise and recognition be more welcome to the Belgians and their King than from England, the great colonising and slave-delivering State

of the world. Will anyone deny, in face of the facts, that this approbation has not been deserved? On the other hand, it is wanted to encourage those who have to continue the half-completed task, and to crown the triumph of civilisation in a region where each successive victory has served to show how heavy was the task to be done, and how greatly it was needed in the name of outraged humanity.

CHAPTER XX

BELGIUM AND THE CONGO

FOR the completion of this survey of the brief but pregnant history of the Congo State, and of the growth of civilisation in Central Africa during the short space of twelve years, there only remains to place before the reader the facts relating to the connection between Belgium and the Congo at the present time. Belgium herself has taken but a small part in the creation of the Congo dominion. She was too timid to essay the adventure, and too cautious and critical to do otherwise than diminish and disparage the value of what was taken in hand on her behalf. As a Belgian colony, the Congo State has been created in the parent State's own despite. But while it is right that these facts should be clearly recognised and understood, it has also to be remembered that the great majority of the men who have done the fighting and the ruling on the Congo, and who have secured for the King's scheme a real chance of success, are Belgians. The bulk of the trade of the country is also with Belgium, and Antwerp is closely associated with the development of Central Africa. That region seems to offer a boundless prospect for profitable investment; and if the Belgians are dubious as to their capacity to establish a vast colony, they have never in any part of the world shown doubt or hesitancy when the enterprise claiming their support offered good security and a reasonable interest. These considerations

render it impossible to say that Belgium is indifferent to the Congo. There is abundant evidence to the contrary; and whenever the State really needed it the Chambers always came to its assistance, with the general support of public opinion. To the King's efforts and Providence has been due the fact that Belgium has been able to indulge her own idiosyncrasies by escaping responsibility and indulging her bent towards timidity, while at the same time she did not lose the prize awaiting the Prince who displayed, in the early stages of the question, the requisite foresight and courage.

The part taken by Belgium in the affairs of the Congo, up to the definite project made in the Chambers for the taking over of the State in the early spring of 1895, has been described in several of the preceding chapters. For the sake of clearness, it will be well to recapitulate the chief points in connection with which the Belgian Government so far modified its attitude of indifference as to lend its aid to the Congo State. In the first place, it permitted, in 1885, the King of the Belgians assuming the title of Sovereign of the Congo State. In 1887 the Chambers sanctioned the first Congo loan of six millions sterling. In 1890, after the second Brussels Conference had arranged for the imposition of a tariff, the Belgian Government was authorised to make an advance of one million sterling, in a sum down of £200,000, and an annual grant of £80,000 a year for ten years, without interest. In return for that concession, Belgium obtained the right, by a formal convention with the Congo State, to take over the African dependency at any date within ten and a half years from its signature. The period expires in January 1901. At the same time as the convention conferred on Belgium the option of taking over the Congo, the revelation of the King's will of the preceding year gave public notification of the fact that, in any event, the Congo State

would revert to Belgium, and could only be repudiated by an act of self-stultification. No eagerness was exhibited to convert the concession into a reality, and several years more passed without any change being produced in the position.

At the end of 1894 the completion of the Arab campaign, the growth of trade, and the increased attention given to African affairs, seemed to justify an attempt to rivet the connection between the two countries, and to remove the anomalous conditions that prevented the Congo State being treated as a Belgian colony. At the same time there were other considerations pointing to the necessity of some fresh arrangement.

The State had been created under many difficulties, and, with a view to preventing the great work expiring of inanition, aid had to be sought in many quarters, and resources raised wherever possible. These had resulted, at the date spoken of, in (first) a certain financial deficit, and in (secondly) the risk of losing valuable and extensive lands on the Congo which had been hypothecated to some Antwerp financiers as security for necessary advances, unless the principal were paid off by a day then close at hand. The financial position, as well as the wish to regularise and strengthen the relations of Belgium and the Congo, brought matters to such a point at the end of 1894 as to determine the Belgian Government to submit a *Projet de Loi* to the Belgian Chambers for the taking over of the Congo.

As the preliminary to this measure, a formal convention was concluded between France and Belgium on 5th February 1895, defining with precision the right of pre-emption ceded to France in 1884, and modified in 1887 in favour of Belgium herself. The following is the full text of this important document:—

Considering that, in virtue of the letters exchanged, the 23rd and 24th April 1884, between M. Strauch, President of the International

Association of the Congo, and M. Jules Ferry, President of Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the French Republic, a right of preference has been assured to France in the event of the Association wishing to realise its possessions, and that this right of preference was maintained when the Independent State of the Congo replaced the International Association :

Considering that, in view of the transfer to Belgium of the possession of the Independent State of the Congo, by virtue of the Treaty of Cession of 9th January 1895, the Belgian Government will be substituted in regard to the obligation contracted under this head by the Government of the said State :

The undersigned have agreed to the following proposals, which shall henceforth regulate the right of preference of France in regard to the Belgian colony of the Congo.

ARTICLE 1.

The Belgian Government recognises for France a right of preference over its Congolese possessions, in the event of their alienation, under compulsion, in whole or in part.

It will equally give effect to the right of preference of France, and will make it, in consequence, an object of prior negotiation between the Government of Belgium and that of the French Republic—all exchange of Congolese territories with any foreign Power, all concessions, all allocation of the said territories, in whole or in part, to the hands of a foreign State, or of a foreign company invested with the rights of sovereignty.

ARTICLE 2.

The Belgian Government declares that it will never cede gratuitously, in whole or in part, these same possessions.

ARTICLE 3.

The arrangements made in the above articles apply to the whole of the territory of the Belgian Congo.

In faith of which the undersigned have drawn up the present arrangement and attached their seals.

Made in duplicate at Paris the 5th February 1895.

BARON D'ANETHAN.
G. HANOTAUX.

While this document cleared the ground so far as Belgium was concerned, it must be noted that it gave

clearer expression, at the least, to those rights of pre-emption which France acquired at a moment of difficulty in the history of the Congo International Association. The article with regard to concessions and allocations of territory may even be pronounced going beyond the original stipulations. This convention had special relation to the Treaty of Cession between Belgium and the Congo State of 9th January 1895, which now claims careful consideration, as forming the basis of the subsequent discussion in Belgium; but, before passing on, it may be stated that this convention possesses no present validity, as it necessarily lapsed at the same time as the Treaty of Cession to which it was linked.

The convention of 3rd July 1890 had given the parent country the right to take over the Congo colony at any date within a period of ten and a half years. The following is the text of the Treaty of 9th January 1895, by which it was proposed for the first, and up to this moment the only time, to give effect to the right.

TREATY FOR THE CESSION OF THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF THE CONGO TO BELGIUM.

The King-Sovereign of the Congo having made known, in his letter of 5th August 1889 to the Belgian Finance Minister, that if it seemed good to Belgium to establish before the specified term closer relations with his possessions of the Congo, His Majesty would not hesitate to place them at her disposal, and the two High Powers being agreed to carry out this cession at this moment:

The following Treaty has been concluded between the Belgian State, represented by Count de Merode de Westerloo, Minister of Foreign Affairs; M. de Burlet, Minister of the Interior and of Public Instruction; and M. de Smet de Naeyer, Minister of Finance, acting under reservation of the approbation of the Legislature,—and the Independent State of the Congo, represented by M. E. Van Eetvelde, Secretary of State of the said Independent State:—

ARTICLE 1.

His Majesty the King-Sovereign declares that he cedes from this

time to Belgium the sovereignty of the territories comprising the Independent State of the Congo, with all the rights and obligations attached thereto, and the Belgian State declares that it accepts this cession.

ARTICLE 2.

The cession comprises all the real and personal property of the State, and notably :

1. The property of all lands belonging to the public or private domain, under reserve of the obligations and charges indicated in Annexe A of the present Convention.

2. The shares and founders' rights assigned to it by the constitution of the Railway Company, as well as all shares and rights assigned to it under the arrangements mentioned in the Annexe A.

3. All buildings, constructions, installations, plantations, and other properties established or acquired by the Government of the Independent State, the personal objects of every kind, and the live stock it possesses, its boats and landing-stages with their material, as well as all its military equipment.

4. Ivory, caoutchouc, and the other African products which are actually the property of the Independent State, as well as the provisions and other merchandise belonging to it.

ARTICLE 3.

On the other hand, the cession includes all the debts and all the financial engagements of the Independent State, as set forth in the Annexe B.

ARTICLE 4.

The date at which Belgium shall assume the exercise of its right of sovereignty over the territories included in Article 1 will be determined by Royal Decree.

The receipts obtained and the disbursements effected by the Independent State of the Congo from the 1st January 1895 are to be to the account of Belgium.

In faith of which the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Treaty and attached their seals.

Made in duplicate at Brussels, 9th January 1895.

EDM. VAN EETVELDE.

COUNT DE MERODE DE WESTERLOO.

J. DE BURLET.

P. DE SMET DE NAEYER.

It will be noticed that this treaty was signed by the Belgian Plenipotentiaries, "under reservation of the approbation of the Legislature"; and as that approbation was never given, this treaty never came into practical effect.

An elaborate *Exposé des Motifs*, with the fullest details as to the political and financial position of the Congo State, was prepared, and placed before the Chambers on 12th February 1895, when their approbation was requested for the proposed Treaty of Cession. The main point that the framers of this interesting document set themselves to prove, was that, from every point of view, the hour had arrived when it would be proper and wise for Belgium to take over the personal direction of the Congo State. On the same day the *Projet de Loi* for the approbation of the cession was also submitted to the House of Representatives by Count Merode. Its text was as follows :—

LEOPOLD II., KING OF THE BELGIANS,

To all present and to come, Salutation,

On the Proposition of our Council of Ministers.

We have decreed, and decree :

Our Ministers of Foreign Affairs, of the Interior and of Public Instruction, of Finance, of Justice, of Agriculture, of Industry, of Labour and Public Works, of War, of Railways, Posts, and Telegraphs, shall present in our name to the Legislative Chambers the *Projet de Loi*, of which the following is the tenor :—

ARTICLE 1.

Is approved, the Treaty of Cession annexed hereto, concluded the 9th January 1895, between Belgium and the Independent State of the Congo.

ARTICLE 2.

There is opened at the Finance Department an extraordinary credit of five million two hundred and fifty thousand francs, to assure the

execution of the Treaty of 9th January 1895. This credit will be covered by an emission of warrants on the Public Debt.

Given at Brussels the 11th February 1895, by the King.

LEOPOLD.

(Here follow signatures of seven Ministers.)

Placed before the Chamber on 12th February, it was referred for consideration to a Special Commission of twenty-one members, whose names were announced on the following day. During more than three months the *Projet de Loi* continued to be discussed and dissected by the Special Commission. In the same period the enemies of the Congo—the majority of them naturally timid and averse to all adventure, but some honestly doubting the merit of the scheme—were alert in their opposition, and a loud-voiced utterance was given to the statement that “Belgium was opposed to the taking over of the Congo,” by the late M. Couvreur, at that time correspondent of the *Times* at Brussels. There were some also who contended that the claim of the Antwerp group, with M. Browne de Tiege at their head, was invalid, as being in contravention of the arrangement of July 1890 with Belgium. These arguments were not the only, or perhaps the chief, reasons for the decision of the Special Commission proving hesitating and slow of expression. The moment was not altogether auspicious for the effective silencing of the State detractors. The resources of the State were still very inadequate, and its trade had not begun that forward movement which has since become so marked. The State Exchequer showed a deficit, and it was to make that good that Belgium was invited to take over the Congo. The suspicions of some of the noisier and more implacable opponents of the African work were aroused and given an air of plausibility, by the admitted deficiency of the State Exchequer to meet an obligation to a creditor and a certain part of its regular expenditure. It was alleged with ever-increasing confidence that the Congo was a

sieve into which the Belgian nation might pour its millions without prospect of return. While these were the views of fiery socialists, it may be pointed out that the Chambers of Commerce of Antwerp, Ghent, and the chief trade centres of the country, were unanimous in presenting addresses in favour of the occupation of the Congo.

It so happened that the Railway Company of the Congo was at this moment also in difficulties, or rather, at the end of its available resources. Everyone knew that the future of the Congo State was more or less bound up with the construction of a railway, and in 1895 less than one fifth of the line had been finished, while all the capital was gone. The facts were, that in those fifty miles the extraordinary and the almost insuperable difficulties of the line were encountered, and that the remainder of the undertaking, although greater in length, presented far fewer difficulties, and was, as a matter of fact, finally achieved for a less sum than the cost of the distance covered in 1895, when the co-operation of the Belgian Government was invited. But facts do not deter party rhetoric, and the failure of the Railway Company to make the railway for a million—an impossible task—was a good enough argument for the Radicals of the Brussels Chambers to assail the whole African enterprise, and to pronounce it “a sad and lamentable failure.”

These were the attendant circumstances under which the Bill proposing that Belgium should take over the Congo State was brought before the Chambers at Brussels. They were certainly not favourable, and calculated perhaps to make the Belgians think more of the debts and difficulties of the Congo State than of the immense field it offered to national activity of every kind. Before the discussion was concluded, news also came of the mutiny at Luluabourg, and waverers were strengthened in their doubts by the prospect of a mutiny of the native army.

Under these circumstances, it was not very surprising that the Special Commission should have had recourse to a compromise.

On the 24th of May the Commission reported in favour of the adoption of the provisional measures required by the situation, instead of the approbation demanded by the Government for the Treaty of Cession. The proposal to convert the Congo State into a Belgian colony was thus allowed to drop, but a helping hand was offered in order to enable it to continue its work. Two days after the notification of the decision of the Commission, Count Merode gave in his resignation; but the other members of the Government were willing to accept the conclusions of the Commission and make the best of them. On the 14th June two fresh *Projets de Loi* were submitted to the Chamber—one authorising the advance of six and a half millions of francs to the State, and the other lending the Railway Company five millions of francs. A debate ensued on the 26th–27th June, when both propositions were carried, and the new convention of 11th June, sanctioning these advances, took the place of the projected Treaty of 9th January 1895. The following is the text of the convention, so far as it related to the State; the amount of the advance sufficing to clear off the obligation to M. Browne de Tiege—thus saving very valuable allocations of territory—and also to meet the deficit on the current account:—

ARTICLE 1.

The Belgian State is authorised to advance, by way of loan and with all rights reserved, to the Independent State of the Congo, a sum of six million eight hundred and fifty thousand francs.

ARTICLE 2.

The advance made by Belgium in execution of Article 1 shall eventually bear interest, and its repayment shall be eventually demandable at the same time and under the same conditions as the

advance made by Belgium to the Independent State in execution of the Convention of 3rd July 1890.

ARTICLE 3.

A credit of six million eight hundred and fifty thousand francs is open at the Department of Finance. It shall be covered, either by the general resources of the Treasury or by the emission of warrants of the Public Debt.

ARTICLE 4.

The present Convention will come into force the day of its publication in the *Moniteur*.

The following is the text of the corresponding convention with the Railway Company :—

ARTICLE 1.

The Government is authorised to grant to the Railway Company of the Congo a loan of five millions of francs. The sum shall be handed over to the Company as the needs of construction arise.

ARTICLE 2.

There is opened at the Treasury the necessary credit.

In this manner was it arranged that Belgium should defer the taking over of the Congo State. The reasons have been given, and are sufficiently obvious. At the moment there were doubts as to its value, and these were enough to largely influence the masses in their views on the subject. The fruit was not yet ripe—the psychological moment had not arrived; and as the title of Belgium to the reversion of the Congo was clear and indefeasible, by the King's will as well as by the formal convention bearing on the subject, there was no grave injury in the postponement of the only natural solution. At the time of the Treaty of Cession there was practical unanimity among the intellectual élite of the Belgian nation, as well as in its commercial and industrial world, as to the intrinsic value of the Congo State, and as to the

imperative duty of the country to ensure its permanent possession.

But these enlightened views could not be expected to permeate the ranks of an uneducated democracy. Only the plainest and most irrefutable facts could sway their opinions : and these pointed to the embarrassment, and not the flourishing condition, of the Central African dominion. In the three years that have intervened, a great improvement has been effected in the financial and industrial position of the Congo State. The railway also has been converted into an unequivocal success, instead of the failure it was assumed to be when all the funds were exhausted after the crossing of the Pallaballa range. Enough has been done to show anyone that the colony in Central Africa is certain to be a remarkable success within a brief period of years ; and if events were to compel Belgium to make a decision suddenly as to the taking over of the Congo State, there is no question that she would do so at once and without a moment's hesitation. The question of Belgium and the Congo, after a long period of doubt and vacillation, has therefore reached this point. Belgian opinion is no longer undecided in its views as to the value of the colony created by the King of the Belgians. It recognises the merit of his work, and is even beginning to feel gratitude for it. Were the *Projet de Loi* of January 1895 reintroduced in the Chamber this winter, it would be passed unanimously. If, for other reasons which will now be glanced at, it should not be so introduced, there is still no longer the shadow of a doubt that, whenever the decision has to be taken by the Belgian Legislature and people, it will be formed promptly, decisively, and irrevocably in favour of the view that the Congo State is an inalienable Belgian colony, obtained by the wisdom of their Sovereign and by the patriotic efforts of worthy representatives of the Belgian race.

But the responsibilities and, let it be added, the experience of active administration, have brought other issues into view, and have suggested that the premature conversion of the Independent State of the Congo into a Belgian colony might be attended with more dangers than advantages. The Congo State has reached its present condition of prosperity because it has been free from the drawbacks of Parliamentary government. If every incident in its career had been made a party issue in the Brussels Chambers, it might well have been that the State would have perished amid the close attentions of its candid friends.

The prosperity and development of the Congo State under the only régime it has yet known have led the most intelligent observers in Belgium—and not only the most intelligent, but those also who are the most sympathetic to the undertaking on the Congo—to form a very strong conviction that, in the interest of the State itself, it would be dangerous and premature to substitute for the wise and cautious administration of the King the eumbrous and often ill-judging direction of a legislative assembly. At the present time the Congo is governed by a simple and swift-dealing autocracy. The Government of the King-Sovereign—with its easy but efficient mechanism, with the power of initiative possessed by its ruler, who is able to form rapid decisions and to put them into immediate effect, and who has, above all, the special knowledge necessary for the maintenance of a consistent policy—has brought the African enterprise through many perils to a point of remarkable prosperity and assured stability. But much of the good achieved would be undone, and many unforeseen dangers would be invited, if for the confident hand of an experienced Prince there were substituted the direction of a Parliamentary government, so ill adapted to the needs of a colony still in its infancy.

Instructed opinion is therefore unanimous in Belgium,

that, in the interests of everyone concerned, it would be unwise to change the existing state of things on the Congo during the life of King Leopold. Under the present system the Belgians possess all the advantages of a colony without any of the inconveniences, and, as long as the King survives, the situation will remain unchanged. When in the course of time a decision has to be taken on the subject of the reversion of the Congo, the position of Belgium will on legal grounds be unassailable, and there will undoubtedly be no delay in the notification of her decision, for it must be remembered that she will have merely to express her acceptance of the legacy left her by her Sovereign. The subsidiary title of Belgium to the Congo under the terms of the convention of 1890, even if renewed for another period of ten years from 1900, as will probably be the case, is calculated only to provide for every contingency, the main claim always being that her King, as soon as he had made the reversion secure by the diplomatic arrangement in which he induced France to waive her prior rights as against Belgium, bequeathed it free of cost and, so far as he could ensure, of risk, to his own people. The bands and links between Belgium and the Congo have been strengthened, and are being riveted more and more every day; but, for the reasons given, there is no necessity to hasten the time of absolute union.

Whenever the question between Belgium and the Congo may be regularised, there is in the meanwhile no doubt of several facts in connection with the African situation. In little more than twelve years since the founding of the State—in a period only five years more remote, if we start from the elevation of the Association's flag at Vivi by Mr. Stanley—a great work of civilisation has been achieved in Central Africa. Civilisation has not merely been introduced, but led far on the road to a signal victory. A great part of an unknown and inaccessible

continent has been opened to commerce. Last, but not least, Belgium has secured, with little cost and effort, one of the most promising colonies of the world.

The reader of the preceding pages, or the student of the subject, will have no difficulty in arriving at a sound conclusion as to how this great work has been brought about. The colonial triumphs of England have been those of a race; and although famous names figure along the track of empire as beacons, the achievement has been performed by the nation—by succeeding generations of our countrymen. The founding and the maintenance of the Congo State has, on the contrary, been the outcome of the energetic efforts of the King of the Belgians. The work he set himself to accomplish was in itself difficult, but it was rendered far more difficult by the doubts and fears of those who ought to have resolutely supported it, and by personal detractors. The success attained carries with it its own reward, in the silencing of the hostile and the calumnious; but it would have been the more rapidly secured, if the Belgian nation had thrown themselves without reserve or hesitation into the task consecrated by the life's labour of their Sovereign. Whenever the psychological moment arrives for Belgium to take over the Congo, she will receive a colony not merely created by the wisdom of King Leopold II., but rendered secure at all points by the prescience with which, in a succession of diplomatic conventions, he has provided for every contingency.

APPENDIX

GENERAL ACT OF THE BERLIN CONFERENCE

In the name of Almighty God,—

His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia ; His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, King of Bohemia, &c., and Apostolic King of Hungary ; His Majesty the King of the Belgians ; His Majesty the King of Denmark ; His Majesty the King of Spain ; the President of the United States of America ; the President of the French Republic ; Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India ; His Majesty the King of Italy ; His Majesty the King of the Netherlands, Grand Duke of Luxembourg, &c. ; His Majesty the King of Portugal and the Algarves, &c. ; His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias ; His Majesty the King of Sweden and Norway, &c. ; and His Majesty the Emperor of the Ottomans,

Wishing, in a spirit of good and mutual accord, to regulate the conditions most favourable to the development of trade and civilisation in certain regions of Africa, and to assure to all nations the advantages of free navigation on the two chief rivers of Africa flowing into the Atlantic Ocean ; being desirous, on the other hand, to obviate the misunderstanding and disputes which might in future arise from new acts of occupation (“prises de possession”) on the coast of Africa ; and concerned, at the same time, as to the means of furthering the moral and material well-being of the native populations : Have resolved, on the invitation addressed to them by the Imperial Government of Germany, in agreement with the Government of the French Republic, to meet for those purposes in Conference at Berlin, and have appointed as their Plenipotentiaries, to wit :—

His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia, Otho, Prince von Bismarck, his President of the Prussian Council of Ministers, Chancellor of the Empire ; Paul, Count von Hatzfeldt, his Minister of State and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs ; Auguste Busch, his Acting Privy Councillor of Legation and Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs ; and Henri von Kusselow, Privy Councillor of Legation in the Department for Foreign Affairs ;

His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, King of Bohemia, &c., and Apostolic King of Hungary, Emeric, Count Széchényi de Sárvári Felső-Vidék, Chamberlain and Acting Privy Councillor, his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia ;

His Majesty the King of the Belgians, Gabriel Auguste Comte Van der Straten Pontthoz, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia ; and Auguste, Baron Lambermont, Minister of State, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary ;

His Majesty the King of Denmark, Emile de Vind, Chamberlain, his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia ;

His Majesty the King of Spain, Don Francisco Merry y Colom, Count Benomar, his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia ;

The President of the United States of America, John A. Kasson, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America at the Court of His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia ; and Henry S. Sanford, ex-Minister ;

The President of the French Republic, Alphonse, Baron de Courcel, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of France at the Court of His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia ;

Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, Sir Edward Baldwin Malet, her Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia ;

His Majesty the King of Italy, Edward, Count de Launay, his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia ;

His Majesty the King of the Netherlands, Grand Duke of Luxembourg, Frederick Philippe, Jonkheer Van der Hoeven, his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia ;

His Majesty the King of Portugal and the Algarves, &c., Da Serra Gomes, Marquis de Penafiel, Peer of the Realm, his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia ; and Antoine de Serpa Pimentel, Councillor of State and Peer of the Realm ;

His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias, Pierre, Count Kapnist, Privy Councillor, his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the King of the Netherlands ;

His Majesty the King of Sweden and Norway, &c., Gillis, Baron Bildt, Lieutenant-General, his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Pleni-

potentiary at the Court of His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia ;

His Majesty the Emperor of the Ottomans, Méhemed Saïd Pasha, Vézir and High Dignitary, his Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia ;

Who, being provided with full powers, which have been found in good and due form, have successively discussed and adopted :—

1. A Declaration relative to freedom of trade in the basin of the Congo, its embouchures and circumjacent regions, with other provisions connected therewith.

2. A Declaration relative to the Slave Trade, and the operations by sea or land which furnish slaves to that trade.

3. A Declaration relative to the neutrality of the territories comprised in the Conventional basin of the Congo.

4. An Act of Navigation for the Congo, which, while having regard to local circumstances, extends to this river, its affluents, and the waters in its system (“eaux qui leur sont assimilées”), the general principles enunciated in Articles CVIII and CXVI of the Final Act of the Congress of Vienna, and intended to regulate, as between the Signatory Powers of that Act, the free navigation of the waterways separating or traversing several States—these said principles having since then been applied by agreement to certain rivers of Europe and America, but especially to the Danube, with the modifications stipulated by the Treaties of Paris (1856), of Berlin (1878), and of London (of 1871 and 1883).

5. An Act of Navigation for the Niger, which, while likewise having regard to local circumstances, extends to this river and its affluents the same principles as set forth in Articles CVIII and CXVI of the Final Act of the Congress of Vienna.

6. A Declaration introducing into international relations certain uniform rules with reference to future occupations on the coasts of the African Continent.

And deeming it expedient that all these several documents should be combined into one single instrument, they (the Signatory Powers) have collected them into one General Act, composed of the following Articles :—

CHAPTER I.—*Declaration relative to Freedom of Trade in the Basin of the Congo, its Mouths and circumjacent Regions, with other Provisions connected therewith.*

ARTICLE 1.

The trade of all nations shall enjoy complete freedom—

1. In all the regions forming the basin of the Congo and its outlets. This basin is bounded by the watersheds (or mountain ridges) of the

adjacent basins, namely, in particular, those of the Niara, the Ogowé, the Schari, and the Nile, on the north; by the eastern watershed line of the affluents of Lake Tanganyika, on the east; and by the watersheds of the basins of the Zambesi and the Logé, on the south. It therefore comprises all the regions watered by the Congo and its affluents, including Tanganyika, with its eastern tributaries.

2. In the maritime zone extending along the Atlantic Ocean from the parallel situated in $2^{\circ} 30'$ of south latitude to the mouth of the Logé.

The northern boundary will follow the parallel situated in $2^{\circ} 30'$ from the coast to the point where it meets the geographical basin of the Congo, avoiding the basin of the Ogowé, to which the provisions of the present Act do not apply.

The southern boundary will follow the course of the Logé to its source, and thence pass eastwards till it joins the geographical basin of the Congo.

3. In the zone stretching eastwards from the Congo basin, as above defined, to the Indian Ocean from the 5° of north latitude to the mouth of the Zambesi in the south, from which point the line of demarcation will ascend the Zambesi to five miles above its confluence with the Shire, and then follow the watershed between the affluents of Lake Nyassa and those of the Zambesi, till at last it reaches the watershed between the waters of the Zambesi and the Congo.

It is expressly recognised that in extending the principle of free trade to this eastern zone the Conference Powers only undertake engagements for themselves, and that in the territories belonging to an independent Sovereign State this principle shall only be applicable in so far as it is approved by such State. But the Powers agree to use their good offices with the Governments established on the African shore of the Indian Ocean for the purpose of obtaining such approval, and in any case of securing the most favourable conditions to the transit (traffic) of all nations.

ARTICLE 2.

All flags, without distinction of nationality, shall have free access to the whole of the coast-line of the territories above enumerated, to the rivers there running into the sea, to all the waters of the Congo and its affluents, including the lakes, and to all the ports situate on the banks of these waters, as well as to all canals which may in future be constructed with intent to unite the watercourses or lakes within the entire area of the territories described in Article 1. Those trading under such flags may engage in all sorts of transport, and carry on the coasting trade by sea and river, as well as boat traffic, on the same footing as if they were subjects.

ARTICLE 3.

Wares, of whatever origin, imported into those regions, under whatsoever flag, by sea or river, or overland, shall be subject to no other taxes than such as may be levied as fair compensation for expenditure in the interest of trade, and which for this reason must be equally borne by the subjects themselves and by foreigners of all nationalities. All differential dues on vessels, as well as on merchandise, are forbidden.

ARTICLE 4.

Merchandise imported into those regions shall remain free from import and transit dues.

The Powers reserve to themselves to determine after the lapse of twenty years whether this freedom of import shall be retained or not.

ARTICLE 5.

No Power which exercises or shall exercise sovereign rights in the above-mentioned regions shall be allowed to grant therein a monopoly or favour of any kind in matters of trade.

Foreigners, without distinction, shall enjoy protection of their persons and property, as well as the right of acquiring and transferring movable and immovable possessions; and national rights and treatment in the exercise of their professions.

ARTICLE 6.—*Provisions relative to Protection of the Natives, of Missionaries and Travellers, as well as relative to Religious Liberty.*

All the Powers exercising sovereign rights or influence in the aforesaid territories bind themselves to watch over the preservation of the native tribes, and to care for the improvement of the conditions of their moral and material well-being, and to help in suppressing slavery, and especially the Slave Trade. They shall, without distinction of creed or nation, protect and favour all religions, scientific or charitable institutions, and undertakings created and organised for the above ends, or which aim at instructing the natives and bringing home to them the blessings of civilisation.

Christian missionaries, scientists, and explorers, with their followers, property, and collections, shall likewise be the objects of especial protection.

Freedom of conscience and religious toleration are expressly guaranteed to the natives, no less than to subjects and to foreigners. The free and public exercise of all forms of Divine worship and the right to

build edifices for religious purposes, and to organise religious missions belonging to all creeds, shall not be limited or fettered in any way whatsoever.

ARTICLE 7.—*Postal Régime.*

The Convention of the Universal Postal Union, as revised at Paris the 1st June 1878, shall be applied to the Conventional basin of the Congo.

The Powers who therein do or shall exercise rights of sovereignty or protectorate engage, as soon as circumstances permit them, to take the measures necessary for the carrying out of the preceding provision.

ARTICLE 8.—*Right of Surveillance vested in the International Navigation Commission of the Congo.*

In all parts of the territory had in view by the present Declaration, where no Power shall exercise rights of sovereignty or protectorate, the International Navigation of the Congo, instituted in virtue of Article 17, shall be charged with supervising the application of the principles proclaimed and perpetuated ("consacrés") by this Declaration.

In all cases of difference arising relative to the application of the principles established by the present Declaration, the Governments concerned may agree to appeal to the good offices of the International Commission, by submitting to it an examination of the facts which shall have occasioned these differences.

CHAPTER II.—*Declaration relative to the Slave Trade.*

ARTICLE 9.

Seeing that trading in slaves is forbidden in conformity with the principles of international law as recognised by the Signatory Powers, and seeing also that the operations which by sea or land furnish slaves to trade ought likewise to be regarded as forbidden, the Powers which do or shall exercise sovereign rights or influence in the territories forming the Conventional basin of the Congo declare that these territories may not serve as a market or means of transit for the Trade in Slaves, of whatever race they may be. Each of the Powers binds itself to employ all the means at its disposal for putting an end to this trade and for punishing those who engage in it.

CHAPTER III.—*Declaration relative to the Neutrality of the Territories comprised in the Conventional Basin of the Congo.*

ARTICLE 10.

In order to give a new guarantee of security to trade and industry,

and to encourage, by the maintenance of peace, the development of civilisation mentioned in Article 1, and placed under the free trade system, the High Signatory Parties to the present Act, and those who shall hereafter adopt it, bind themselves to respect the neutrality of the territories, or portions of territories, belonging to the said countries, comprising therein the territorial waters, so long as the Powers which exercise or shall exercise the rights of sovereignty or protectorate over those territories, using their option of proclaiming themselves neutral, shall fulfil the duties which neutrality requires.

ARTICLE 11.

In case a Power exercising rights of sovereignty or protectorate in the countries mentioned in Article 1, and placed under the free trade system, shall be involved in a war, then the High Signatory Parties to the present Act, and those who shall hereafter adopt it, bind themselves to lend their good offices in order that the territories belonging to this Power and comprised in the Conventional free trade zone shall, by the common consent of this Power and of the other belligerent or belligerents, be placed during the war under the rule of neutrality, and considered as belonging to a non-belligerent State, the belligerents thenceforth abstaining from extending hostilities to the territories thus neutralised, and from using them as a base for warlike operations.

ARTICLE 12.

In case a serious disagreement originating on the subject of, or in the limits of, the territories mentioned in Article 1 and placed under the free trade system, shall arise between any Signatory Powers of the present Act, or the Powers which may become parties to it, these Powers bind themselves, before appealing to arms, to have recourse to the mediation of one or more of the friendly Powers.

In a similar case the same Powers reserve to themselves the option of having recourse to arbitration.

CHAPTER IV.—*Act of Navigation for the Congo.*

ARTICLE 13.

The navigation of the Congo, without excepting any of its branches or outlets, is, and shall remain, free for the merchant ships of all nations equally, whether carrying cargo or ballast, for the transport of goods or passengers. It shall be regulated by the provisions of this Act of Navigation, and by the rules to be made in pursuance thereof.

In the exercise of this navigation the subjects and flags of all nations shall in all respects be treated on a footing of perfect equality,

not only for the direct navigation from the open sea to the inland ports of the Congo and *vice versé*, but also for the great and small coasting trade, and for boat traffic on the course of the river.

Consequently, on all the course and mouths of the Congo there will be no distinction made between the subjects of Riverain States and those of non-Riverain States, and no exclusive privilege of navigation will be conceded to companies, corporations, or private persons whatsoever.

These provisions are recognised by the Signatory Powers as becoming henceforth a part of international law.

ARTICLE 14.

The navigation of the Congo shall not be subject to any restriction or obligation which is not expressly stipulated by the present Act. It shall not be exposed to any landing dues, to any station or depôt tax, or to any charge for breaking bulk, or for compulsory entry into port.

In all the extent of the Congo the ships and goods in process of transit on the river shall be submitted to no transit dues, whatever their starting-place or destination.

There shall be levied no maritime or river toll based on the mere fact of navigation, nor any tax on goods aboard of ships. There shall only be levied taxes or duties having the character of an equivalent for services rendered to navigation itself, to wit:—

1. Harbour dues on certain local establishments, such as wharves, warehouses, &c., if actually used.

The tariff of such dues shall be framed according to the cost of constructing and maintaining the said local establishments; and it will be applied without regard to whence vessels come or what they are loaded with.

2. Pilot dues for those stretches of the river where it may be necessary to establish properly qualified pilots.

The tariff of these dues shall be fixed and calculated in proportion to the service rendered.

3. Charges raised to cover technical and administrative expenses incurred in the general interest of navigation, including lighthouse, beacon, and buoy duties.

The last-mentioned dues shall be based on the tonnage of vessels as shown by the ship's papers, and in accordance with the rules adopted on the Lower Danube.

The tariffs by which the various dues and taxes enumerated in the three preceding paragraphs shall be levied, shall not involve any differential treatment, and shall be officially published at each port.

The Powers reserve to themselves to consider, after the lapse of five

years, whether it may be necessary to revise, by common accord, the above-mentioned tariffs.

ARTICLE 15.

The affluents of the Congo shall in all respects be subject to the same rules as the river of which they are tributaries.

And the same rules shall apply to the streams and river as well as the lakes and canals in the territories defined in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 1.

At the same time the powers of the International Commission of the Congo will not extend to the said rivers, streams, lakes, and canals unless with the assent of the States under whose sovereignty they are placed. It is well understood, also, that with regard to the territories mentioned in paragraph 3 of Article 1, the consent of the Sovereign States owning these territories is reserved.

ARTICLE 16.

The roads, railways, or lateral canals which may be constructed with the special object of obviating the innavigability or correcting the imperfection of the river route on certain sections of the course of the Congo, its affluents, and other waterways placed under a similar system, as laid down in Article 15, shall be considered, in their quality of means of communication, as dependencies of this river and as equally open to the traffic of all nations.

And as on the river itself, so there shall be collected on these roads, railways, and canals only tolls calculated on the cost of construction, maintenance, and management, and on the profits due to the promoters.

As regards the tariff of these tolls, strangers and the natives of the respective territories shall be treated on a footing of perfect equality.

ARTICLE 17.

There is instituted an International Commission, charged with the execution of the provisions of the present Act of Navigation.

The Signatory Powers of this Act, as well as those who may subsequently adhere to it, may always be represented on the said Commission, each by one Delegate. But no Delegate shall have more than one vote at his disposal, even in the case of his representing several Governments.

This Delegate will be directly paid by his Government. As for the various agents and employés of the International Commission, their remuneration shall be charged to the amount of the dues collected in conformity with paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 14.

The particulars of the said remuneration, as well as the number,

grade, and powers of the agents and employés, shall be entered in the Returns to be sent yearly to the Governments represented on the International Commission.

ARTICLE 18.

The members of the International Commission, as well as its appointed agents, are invested with the privileges of inviolability in the exercise of their functions. The same guarantee shall apply to the offices and archives of the Commission.

ARTICLE 19.

The International Commission for the Navigation of the Congo shall be constituted as soon as five of the Signatory Powers of the present General Act shall have appointed their Delegates. And pending the constitution of the Commission the nomination of these Delegates shall be notified to the Imperial Government of Germany, which will see to it that the necessary steps are taken to summon the meeting of the Commission.

The Commission will at once draw up Navigation, River Police, Pilot, and Quarantine Rules.

These Rules, as well as the tariffs to be framed by the Commission, shall, before coming into force, be submitted for approval to the Powers represented on the Commission. The Powers interested will have to communicate their views with as little delay as possible.

Any infringements of these Rules will be checked by the agents of the International Commission wherever it exercises direct authority, and elsewhere by the Riverain Power.

In the case of an abuse of power, or an act of injustice, on the part of any agent or employé of the International Commission, the individual who considers himself to be aggrieved in his person or rights may apply to the Consular Agent of his country. The latter will examine his complaint, and if he finds it *primâ facie* reasonable, he will then be entitled to bring it before the Commission. At his instance then, the Commission, represented by at least three of its members, shall in conjunction with him inquire into the conduct of its agent or employé. Should the Consular Agent look upon the decision of the Commission as raising questions of law ("objections de droit"), he will report on the subject to his Government, which may then have recourse to the Powers represented on the Commission, and invite them to agree as to the instructions to be given to the Commission.

ARTICLE 20.

The International Commission of the Congo, charged in terms of

Article 17 with the execution of the present Act of Navigation, shall in particular have power—

1. To decide what works are necessary to assure the navigability of the Congo in accordance with the needs of international trade.

On those sections of the river where no Power exercises sovereign rights, the International Commission will itself take the necessary measures for assuring the navigability of the river.

On those sections of the river held by a Sovereign Power, the International Commission will concert its action (“s’entendra”) with the riparian authorities.

2. To fix the pilot tariff and that of the general navigation dues as provided for by paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 14.

The tariffs mentioned in the first paragraph of Article 14 shall be framed by the territorial authorities within the limits prescribed in the said Article.

The levying of the various dues shall be seen to by the international or territorial authorities on whose behalf they are established.

3. To administer the revenue arising from the application of the preceding paragraph (2).

4. To superintend the quarantine establishment created in virtue of Article 24.

5. To appoint officials for the general service of navigation, and also its own proper employés.

It will be for the territorial authorities to appoint Sub-Inspectors on sections of the river occupied by a Power, and for the International Commission to do so on the other sections.

The Riverain Power will notify to the International Commission the appointment of Sub-Inspectors, and this Power will undertake the payment of their salaries.

In the exercise of its functions as above defined and limited, the International Commission will be independent of the territorial authorities.

ARTICLE 21.

In the accomplishment of its task the International Commission may, if need be, have recourse to the war-vessels of the Signatory Powers of this Act, and of those who may in future accede to it, under reserve, however, of the instructions which may be given to the Commanders of these vessels by their respective Governments.

ARTICLE 22.

The war-vessels of the Signatory Powers of this Act that may enter the Congo are exempt from payment of the navigation dues provided for in paragraph 3 of Article 14; but unless their intervention has been

called for by the International Commission or its agents, in terms of the preceding Article, they shall be liable to the payment of the pilot or harbour dues which may eventually be established.

ARTICLE 23.

With the view of providing for the technical and administrative expenses which it may incur, the International Commission created by Article 17 may, in its own name, negotiate loans to be exclusively guaranteed by the revenues raised by the said Commission.

The decisions of the Commission dealing with the conclusion of a loan must be come to by a majority of two-thirds. It is understood that the Governments represented on the Commission shall not in any case be held as assuming any guarantee, or as contracting any engagement or joint liability (*"solidarité"*) with respect to the said loans, unless under special Conventions concluded by them to this effect.

The revenue yielded by the dues specified in paragraph 3 of Article 14 shall bear, as a first charge, the payment of the interest and sinking fund of the said loans, according to agreement with the lenders.

ARTICLE 24.

At the mouth of the Congo there shall be founded, either on the initiative of the Riverain Powers, or by the intervention of the International Commission, a quarantine establishment for the control of vessels passing out of as well as into the river.

Later on, the Powers will decide whether and on what conditions a sanitary control shall be exercised over vessels engaged in the navigation of the river itself.

ARTICLE 25.

The provisions of the present Act of Navigation shall remain in force in time of war. Consequently all nations, whether neutral or belligerent, shall always be free, for the purposes of trade, to navigate the Congo, its branches, affluents, and mouths, as well as the territorial waters fronting the embouchure of the river.

Traffic will similarly remain free, despite a state of war, on the roads, railways, lakes, and canals mentioned in Articles 15 and 16.

There will be no exception to this principle except in so far as concerns the transport of articles intended for a belligerent and, in virtue of the law of nations, regarded as contraband of war.

All the works and establishments created in pursuance of the present Act, especially the tax-collecting offices and their treasuries, as well as the permanent service staff of these establishments, shall enjoy the benefits of neutrality (*"placés sous le régime de la neutralité"*), and shall therefore be respected and protected by belligerents.

CHAPTER V.—*Act of Navigation for the Niger.*

ARTICLE 26.

The navigation of the Niger, without excepting any of its branches and outlets, is and shall remain entirely free for the merchant-ships of all nations equally, whether with cargo or ballast, for the transportation of goods and passengers. It shall be regulated by the provisions of this Act of Navigation, and by the rules to be made in pursuance of this Act.

In the exercise of this navigation the subjects and flags of all nations shall be treated, in all circumstances, on a footing of perfect equality, not only for the direct navigation from the open sea to the inland ports of the Niger and *vice versâ*, but for the great and small coasting trade, and for boat trade on the course of the river.

Consequently, on all the course and mouths of the Niger there will be no distinction made between the subjects of the Riverain States and those of non-Riverain States; and no exclusive privilege of navigation will be conceded to companies, corporations, or private persons.

These provisions are recognised by the Signatory Powers as forming henceforth a part of international law.

ARTICLE 27.

The navigation of the Niger shall not be subject to any restriction or obligation based merely on the fact of navigation.

It shall not be exposed to any obligation in regard to landing, station or depôt, or for breaking bulk, or for compulsory entry into port.

In all the extent of the Niger the ships and goods in process of transit on the river shall be submitted to no transit dues, whatever their starting place or destination.

No maritime or river toll shall be levied based on the sole fact of navigation, nor any tax on goods on board of ships. There shall only be collected taxes or duties which shall be an equivalent for services rendered to navigation itself. The tariff of these taxes or duties shall not warrant any differential treatment.

ARTICLE 28.

The affluents of the Niger shall be in all respects subject to the same rules as the river of which they are tributaries.

ARTICLE 29.

The roads, railways, or lateral canals which may be constructed with the special object of obviating the innavigability or correcting the imper-

fections of the river route on certain sections of the course of the Niger, its affluents, branches, and outlets, shall be considered, in their quality of means of communication, as dependencies of this river and as equally open to the traffic of all nations.

And as on the river itself, so there shall be collected on these roads, railways, and canals only tolls calculated on the cost of construction, maintenance, and management, and on the profits due to the promoters.

As regards the tariff of these tolls, strangers and the natives of the respective territories shall be treated on a footing of perfect equality.

ARTICLE 30.

Great Britain undertakes to apply the principles of freedom of navigation enunciated in Articles 26, 27, 28, and 29, on so much of the waters of the Niger, its affluents, branches, and outlets, as are or may be under her sovereignty or protection.

The rules which she may establish for the safety and control of navigation shall be drawn up in a way to facilitate, as far as possible, the circulation of merchant-ships.

It is understood that nothing in these obligations shall be interpreted as hindering Great Britain from making any rules of navigation whatever which shall not be contrary to the spirit of these engagements.

Great Britain undertakes to protect foreign merchants and all the trading nationalities on all those portions of the Niger which are or may be under her sovereignty or protection as if they were her own subjects, provided always that such merchants conform to the rules which are or shall be made in virtue of the foregoing.

ARTICLE 31.

France accepts, under the same reservations, and in identical terms, the obligations undertaken in the preceding Articles in respect of so much of the waters of the Niger, its affluents, branches, and outlets, as are or may be under her sovereignty or protection.

ARTICLE 32.

Each of the other Signatory Powers binds itself in the same way, in case it should ever exercise in the future rights of sovereignty or protection over any portion of the waters of the Niger, its affluents, branches, or outlets.

ARTICLE 33.

The arrangements of the present Act of Navigation will remain in force in time of war. Consequently, the navigation of all neutral or belligerent nations will be in all times free for the usages of commerce on

the Niger, its branches, its affluents, its mouths, and outlets, as well as on the territorial waters opposite the mouths and outlets of that river.

The traffic will remain equally free in spite of a state of war on the roads, railways, and canals mentioned in Article 29.

There will be an exception to this principle only in that which relates to the transport of articles destined for a belligerent and considered, in virtue of the law of nations, as articles of contraband of war.

CHAPTER VI.—*Declaration relative to the essential Conditions to be observed in order that new Occupations on the Coasts of the African Continent may be held to be effective.*

ARTICLE 34.

Any Power which henceforth takes possession of a tract of land on the coasts of the African Continent outside of its present possessions, or which, being hitherto without such possessions, shall acquire them, as well as the Power which assumes a protectorate there, shall accompany the respective act with a notification thereof, addressed to the other Signatory Powers of the present Act, in order to enable them, if need be, to make good any claims of their own.

ARTICLE 35.

The Signatory Powers of the present Act recognise the obligation to ensure the establishment of authority in the regions occupied by them on the coasts of the African Continent sufficient to protect existing rights, and, as the case may be, freedom of trade and of transit under the conditions agreed upon.

CHAPTER VII.—*General Dispositions.*

ARTICLE 36.

The Signatory Powers of the present General Act reserve to themselves to introduce into it subsequently, and by common accord, such modifications and improvements as experience may show to be expedient.

ARTICLE 37.

The Powers who have not signed the present General Act shall be free to adhere to its provisions by a separate instrument.

The adhesion of each Power shall be notified in diplomatic form to the Government of the German Empire, and by it in turn to all the other Signatory or adhering Powers.

Such adhesion shall carry with it full acceptance of all the obli-

gations as well as admission to all the advantages stipulated by the present General Act.

ARTICLE 38.

The present General Act shall be ratified with as little delay as possible, the same in no case to exceed a year.

It will come into force for each Power from the date of its ratification by that Power.

Meanwhile, the Signatory Powers of the present General Act bind themselves not to take any steps contrary to its provisions.

Each Power will address its ratification to the Government of the German Empire, by which notice of the fact will be given to all the other Signatory Powers of the present Act.

The ratifications of all the Powers will be deposited in the archives of the Government of the German Empire. When all the ratifications shall have been sent in, there will be drawn up a Deposit Act, in the shape of a Protocol, to be signed by the Representatives of all the Powers which have taken part in the Conference of Berlin, and of which a certified copy will be sent to each of those Powers.

In testimony whereof the several Plenipotentiaries have signed the present General Act and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done at Berlin the 26th day of February 1885.

(Here follow the signatures of the Plenipotentiaries in the order of their names in the preamble.)

CARTE
DE
L'ÉTAT INDÉPENDANT
DU
CONGO

Publiée par J. LEBÈGUE & C^{ie}
d'après les renseignements fournis
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C O N G O

FRANCIS

A small, detailed map of the region around the village of Krasnoye. The map shows the village, surrounding fields, and a river. The map is oriented with North at the top. The village is located in the center of the map, with fields to the north and south. A river flows from the north to the south, passing through the village. The map is drawn in black ink on a white background.

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POSSESSIONS

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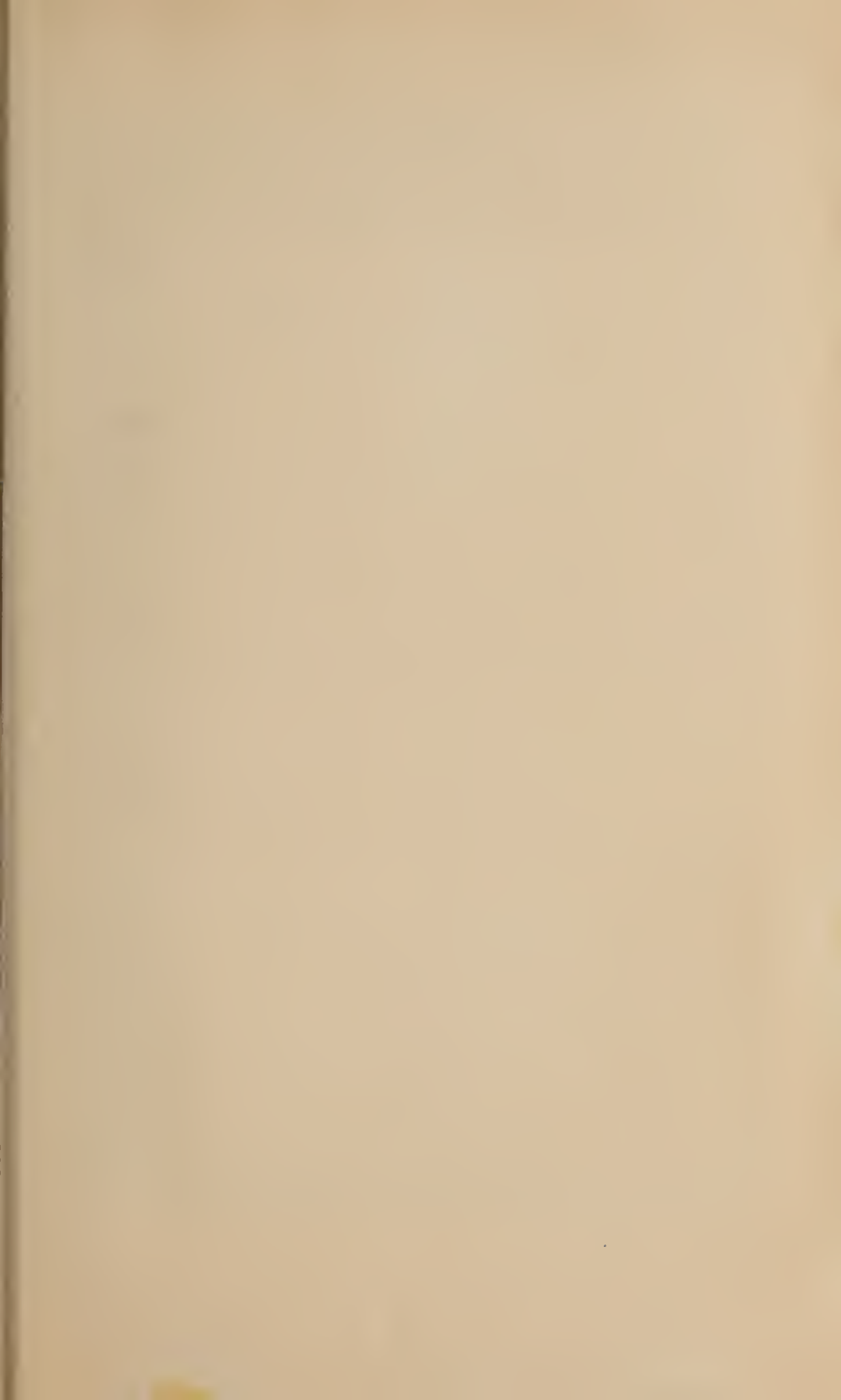
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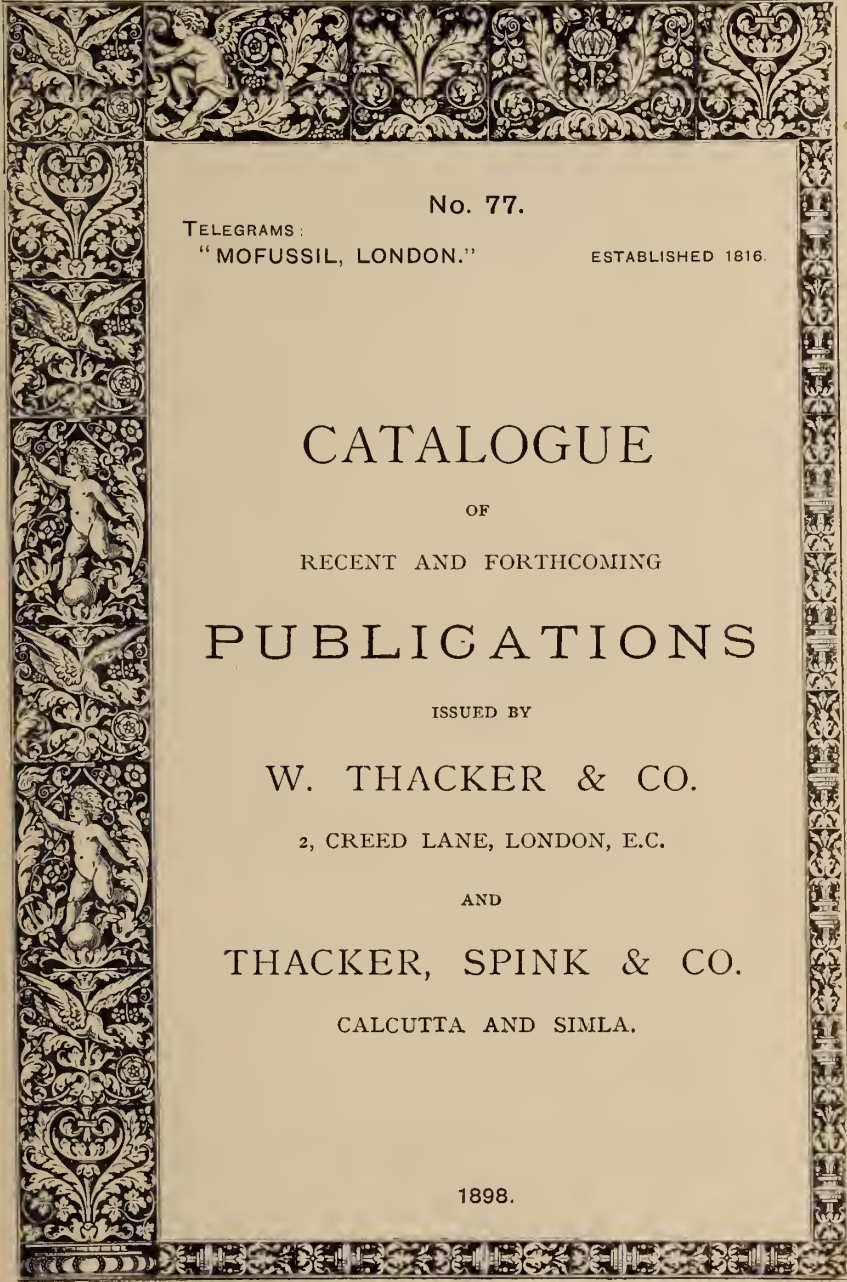
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